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WCP SURVEY
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

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NATIONAL SURVEY OF
WHITE-COLLAR PAY

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QUESTION AND ANSWERS

WHITE-COLLAR PAY SURVEY

September 1989

The following series of questions and answers is designed to aid in reviewing the basic elements of the job definitions. Where possible, the questions cover points that were raised in field representative's end-of-survey reports and in individual schedules. Although the answers may elaborate on particular items in the definitions, there is no intent to introduce additional elements into the basic definitions or to amend them in any way.

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☞ --marks new or revised questions and answers for 1990

GENERAL QUESTIONS

1. Is there a single "key statement" in any level definition which alone serves to distinguish it from all other levels in the occupations?

1a. All of the elements in each level definition must be considered in making a classification judgment. For example, in some BLS occupations, individuals classified at different levels of an occupation can perform work of essentially the same complexity, but have significant differences in direction received or in responsibility for the direction of others.

2. Why is active participation by the field economists required in job matching?

2a. The complexity of occupations, diversity of titles for the same occupation and of duties for occupations with the same title, need for identifying levels which may not be reflected directly in the establishment's structure, and other factors make active participation during the matching process extremely important. The field economist can apply knowledge of the definitions gained through training and experience to promote efficiency and accuracy in the matching process. Employers, at most, can devote only a few hours to studying the definitions, and this is not enough to do a satisfactory job of applying them.

3. What is a "borderline" match?

3a. A job match which is judged, by the field economist and respondent, to be best choice of possible alternative matches. (All "borderline" matches should be fully explained in the job match worksheet.)

4. What directions are given in the WCP supplementary field instructions regarding such matches?

4a. Since changes in borderline matches affect year-to-year comparability of data, they should be avoided unless there is clear evidence that a change is justified. When there is no clear evidence of error, or in borderline situations where a change is the job match would be only a difference in judgment with the previous data collector, the job match should not be changed. If a change is made, the explanation must be entered in sufficient detail to leave no doubt that the change definitely was justified.

5. What are some examples of matches requiring detailed explanations on the job match worksheet?

5a. (1) A job fits partly into two levels of a BLS definition. The field economist and respondent decide that placing it in one of the two levels is preferable to splitting it between two levels.

(2) An establishment job is so broad in scope that it spans two levels a BLS occupation. A judgment is made that the job can be split on the basis of several criteria (e.g., nature of assignments of employees in the job, standing of employees in the grade range, time in the job, etc.). It is, therefore, classified in the two BLS levels as agreed to by the respondent and field economist.

(3) A director of personnel in an establishment of a company is matched at level V. The establishment has 10,000 employees and the organization serviced is "type B," but is not an entire company. Discussion of the delegation of responsibility and independence of the personnel operation from the parent company causes the field economist to consider this to be a "Personnel program, development level." For this reason the job is matched at level V instead of IV.

6. Should matches such a those in the above question ever be changed?

6a. When clear evidence of error is found, the match should, of course, be changed. Also, a level match change may be required due to a change in the nature of the job itself since the previous survey. For example, in "single incumbent" jobs, duties and responsibilities may change when a different person takes the job. (In the interest of year-to-year survey comparability, changes should not be made in such matches unless actual changes in the job occurred or error is found.)

7. If it is determined that one establishment level of an occupation encompasses the duties and responsibilities in more than one BLS level, can acceptable job matches be made?

7a. In such situations, ideally, the duties and responsibilities of each employees should be matched to the appropriate survey level. However, this technique may not be feasible when large numbers of employees are involved. In such cases, exploration of the establishment job level will usually reveal to the field economist and respondent a basis for determining the proper allocation of employees to BLS levels based upon the defined duties and responsibilities. For example, an establishment may have one job category such as "Junior Engineer" which includes workers performing at levels I through III of the BLS definition. A parallel review of the three BLS level definitions and the structure of the establishment job often reveals acceptable criteria for placing workers in appropriate levels. For instance, reviews of beginning engineers may be made periodically, at which time each individual is separately evaluated as to progress made in developing the ability to handle more difficult work. Such evaluations sometimes group individuals in a manner which is helpful in determining their distribution among BLS levels. Another possibility is that the company might move its new employees through a prescribed training and development program at established time intervals. If so, an examination of the program might permit good matches to be made based on length of service. In cases involving journeyman level workers, questioning might reveal that only employees who have demonstrated their ability to work at higher levels can progress beyond set points in the rate range (the midpoint and third quartile, for example.) These required levels of work may correspond to BLS levels, in which case the workers can possibly be split on the basis of pay rates.

In any event, the data collector must use judgment in selecting the appropriate basis for matching in such situations.

If no reasonable way can be found to break the establishment job into BLS levels, and if the workers in the job are not performing work essentially representative of a single BLS work level, the job should not be matched. In any of the situations discussed in this Q and A, detailed documentation for reference in future years is essential.

8. When rescheduling an establishment with only a few job matches and no changes in job incumbents, should it be assumed that there will be no matching changes?

8a. No. New matchable jobs may have come into existence or vacancies existing in the previous survey may have been filled. "Single incumbent" type jobs that reflect the personality of the job holder should receive careful review. Often with increasing experience, the incumbent assumes additional responsibilities. Thus, a job previously matched at level III may now match level IV.

9. Do the same Roman numerals represent essentially the same levels in each series?

9a. Roman numeral designations for levels are not intended to represent equivalent levels for all survey occupations. For example, level I is the beginning professional trainee level for several occupations. Level I is also assigned to the first level of occupations which do not include a trainee position, such as chief accountant.

10. Should "quality graduate" bachelor-degreed person (those with high standing in graduating class) and those with advance degrees or graduate level studies, and having no work experience be matched at level I in those occupations in which this level is described as the "beginning professional or trainee level"?

10a. Persons considered "quality graduates" or having appropriate graduate level studies are often employed at levels above I because such employees tend to be assigned more difficult work than is typical of level I. It should be determined which BLS level definition best matches the duties and responsibilities assigned such personnel. If the more preferable method of matching on the basis of the definition is not feasible, and the establishments has a graded system, level matching of engineers, for example, may be guided by the relative position of the incumbent in the structure as compared with matches made for other engineers in the establishment. (If the advanced-degree person, for example, is placed in the same grade as a BLS level III match, the position may be matched at that level.) See note in Chemists and Engineers, question number 4.

11. Should bachelor-degreed persons with prior work experience be automatically matched at BLS levels II or above, in those occupations which describe level I as the "beginning or trainee level"?

11a. No. Bachelor-degreed persons with prior work experience are usually, but not necessarily, assigned more difficult work than is typical of level I. It should be determined which BLS level definition best matches the duties and responsibilities assigned such personnel.

12. Should bank officers be matched to BLS professional and administrative jobs? If so, how far up the bank hierarchy should they be matched?

12a. Bank officers are eligible for matching unless they are significantly involved in corporate-wide policy-making decisions (e.g., they sit on either the board of directors or a management committee). Below the policy-making level, officer status, by itself, is not typically an exclusion (in terms of duties and responsibilities). Officers in some banks are on a separate executive-level pay schedule, but this is not a reason for exclusion.

13. In applying the BLS definitions, how should conflicts between "duties and responsibilities" and "education and experience requirements" be resolved? Also, for those BLS jobs which do not specify education or experience requirements, of what use are establishment job qualifications in supporting BLS matches?

13a. Some BLS definitions stipulate minimum education and/or experience requirements; these requirements must be met. However, for each WCP match, there must also be a reasonable correlation between the duties and responsibilities of the WCP job definition and the establishment job. For example, entry level professional positions which meet the education and experience requirements for BLS level I but which perform lower level duties than those described in the BLS definition should be excluded; Ph.D. chemists and engineers who perform III rather than IV level duties should be matched at level III.

Documentation of education and experience requirements is useful in supporting the level of all WCP matches because education and experience are related to the knowledge typically required by establishments to perform the duties and responsibilities of specific job levels. They serve as a test of reasonableness for job matches. Note, however, that qualification requirements for WCP jobs vary widely among industries and also according to the pay and promotion policies and personnel needs of individual establishments. Therefore, it could be misleading to compare education and experience requirements for Non-Federal jobs to those of the Federal Government.

14. Some establishment positions have specific licensing requirements (e.g., FCC radio license for engineering technicians; CPA for accountants, auditors, chief accountants, and public accountants; and PE for engineers). How do these licensing requirements affect WCP matches?

14a. Licensing requirements do not affect WCP matches. Sometimes these requirements are found at relatively low WCP levels (e.g., accountants II and III, engineers III).

15. When new WCP jobs are added to the survey, the tech memo indicates that the salaries to be used in computing pay relatives are extrapolated from test materials. What procedures are used to produce there estimates?

15a. When new WCP jobs are developed, they are tested in approximately 60 to 150 establishments that are within the survey scope. Salaries collected during the test visits are tallied by industry and employment size. When possible, they are compared with salaries collected for equivalent WCP job levels within the same establishment.

16. For white-collar job levels which are considered to be "trainee" positions (e.g., accountant I, auditor I, computer programmer I, chemist I, engineer I, drafter I, computer operator I), should we match workers whose pay is significantly influenced by prior work experience? For example, should a long-term key entry operator who has moved into a computer operator trainee position and whose rate reflects years of data entry experience be matched as a computer operator I?

16a. Salaries which fail to reflect trainee status, due to significant establishment work experience, should be excluded. Disregard (in this instance) OWS manual instructions which infer that all rates within an establishment's rate range for a specific job match are acceptable.

17. Why are establishment grades or evaluation points for EDP jobs and secretaries often lower than for other "equivalent" matches for WCP occupations? Are these jobs overgraded in the Federal Government?

17a. We recognize that EDP occupations and secretaries in surveyed establishments are often graded lower than "equivalent" WCP jobs in the same establishment. Although there is no acknowledgement of overgrading by OPM officials, secretaries and EDP positions are highly populated Federal jobs and are in great demand in the Federal government. Therefore, market pressures may have had an effect on the high Federal grades for these jobs. It is not uncommon for some private industry firms to arbitrarily raise the grades or evaluation points for occupations critical to their operations. In any event, it remains the field economists' responsibility to match jobs objectively and to maintain neutrality regarding federal grading of occupations.

18. ☞ Why doesn't the Washington office reorder the job list, job descriptions, and job match worksheet by major functions (e.g., accounting, personnel)? Such a reordering would facilitate field representatives in job matching.

18a. The job list, job descriptions, and job match worksheet are currently ordered by occupational class (i.e., professional and administrative, technical support, and clerical) to facilitate SEAS editing of job matches and salary data. Salary data and their corresponding pay relatives are most meaningful on a SEAS edit when grouped by occupational class. The SEAS edits must be in the same order as the job match worksheet to facilitate editing. Also, for some of the survey's largest establishments, data must be collected either separately or in sequence for exempt and nonexempt occupations.

ACCOUNTANTS

1. Can an accountant who is concerned with data processing be a valid match for the BLS accountant series?

1a. The accountant may be a valid match if the following criteria are met: (a) The primary concern of the position must be operation of the accounting system; (b) any participation in data processing work must be restricted to the accounting operations system; and (c) the job must meet the basic requirements of an accountant doing professional accounting work, as specified in the introduction to the BLS accountant series.

Within this framework, an accountant might, for example, serve as a member of a team engaged in the overall review of the accounting system's data processing requirements, or participate with data processing personnel in the detailed design of data processing applications, and might occasionally perform programming tests.

2. What is meant by this statement in the Accountant I definition: "...the existence, implicit or explicit, of a planned training program....."? Must this be a formal program?

2a. In smaller systems, particularly, the training may consist of having the qualified inexperienced employee work with or assist experienced professional accountants. As long as th intent or product of the assignment serves to acquaint the trainee with the system and allow for an introduction to the application of professional theory and practice, the accountant may be considered to be in a training program. The essence of the reference to a planned program, with the object of moving the accountant to professional practice, is to help distinguish the professionally trained. (Both may be performing essentially the same duties during the period the professional is in training.)

3. If inexperienced accountants, who match the level I (and II) BLS definitions are found in the same establishment job as experienced accounting clerks, how should this job be matched?

3a. The accountants should be separated from the accounting clerks and matched in accordance with the appropriate BLS levels. The accounting clerks should be matched in their own series.

4. Can accountants who are supervisors be classified in any of the work levels defined?

4a. In general, operating accounting positions are supervisory in nature. The level definitions are applicable to both supervisory and nonsupervisory positions since, in most instances, it is the level of the professional work rather than the supervisory responsibility which establishes the basis of the level of the position. However, note that the description specifically excludes those whose sole duties in the area of accounting are supervision of the performance of routine tasks, without the use of professional accounting knowledge.

5. The accountant definitions exclude those whose principal or sole duty is designing or improving accounting systems. Accountant V, however, states that workers at this level perform such professional work as "participating in the development and coordinating the implementation of new and revised accounting systems, and initiating necessary instructions and procedures." Accountants VI "are delegated complete responsibility from higher authority to establish and implement new or revised accounting policies and procedures." Can this be clarified?

5a. As specified in the definition, Accountants V and VI may be quite involved with what the accounting system should be; however, this is directly related and subordinate to the principal responsibility at these levels, which is the operation of the system or one of its major segments. Staff accountants, who are excluded, would not be responsible for the day-to-day work performed.

6. What is a budget analyst? In matching, is it permissible for an accountant to perform some budget analysis?

6a. A budget analyst typically compares budget projections with actual expenses and investigates discrepancies. Although budget analysts are excluded from BLS accountant matches, in some establishments operating accountants may perform some budget analysis as an incidental function. For example, a cost and budget analyst, when compiling cost data, may compare actual expenses with budget projection and turn the data over to the budget section for reconciliation. Cost and budget analysts who study budget variances should be excluded.

7. How is it possible to determine when financial analysis and/or forecasting is a primary duty and a reason for exclusion.

7a. You can usually tell from the reporting relationships. Financial analysts and forecasters are typically concerned with historical and future accounting and statistical trends, rather than with the day-to-day operation of the accounting system. Therefore, they usually work either as an "assistant to" a financial officer or in a separate section concerned with financial analysis, planning, or forecasting.

8. When, if ever, should accounts payable and accounts receivable supervisors be matched as BLS accountants?

8a. Only when they perform several of the nonroutine professional accounting duties listed in the introduction to the BLS accountant definition. Otherwise, they should be excluded as being primarily clerical supervisors, regardless or whether or not they have a 4-year accounting degree.

9. What is an Accounting System; what is a segment of a system?

9a. Accounting is the discipline of recording, classifying, and summarizing financial transactions and events and interpreting or projecting their results. An accounting system is the orderly structure necessary to make accounting possible. It's three principal components are:

- The account structure - the various sets or "books" of double-entry accounts used to record transactions;

- The reporting structure - the body of reports which is prepared to summarize the accumulated accounting data needed for management purposes; and

- The procedural instructions - manuals, methods, and directives which provide detailed steps to be taken in operating the system, acquiring the basic information about the transaction, and processing the documents.

Accounting systems may exist at a variety of organizational levels. A small organization may find a single system adequate. However, a large organization typically has a multi-level system, (e.g., operating unit, through regional office, to headquarters with data feeding up to and through succeedingly higher systems.) Higher echelons may prescribe general rules and formats to be followed by lower echelons to assure sufficient uniformity of coordination. Nevertheless, there is still room within such a framework for even the lowest echelon to "customize" its system in order to effectively produce the particular financial information its management needs.

A segment of a system is some portion of any complete system: (1) accounts, (2) the reporting process, or (3) the overall accounting procedures. For example, responsibility for reports and statements may belong to the individual or unit. Such responsibility would be considered a "major segment" as the term is used in the BLS definition. Or the organization may prefer to separate accounting work along "account" lines (e.g., into accounting activities). Then a major segment might include responsibility for one of the more important activities in the system, such as cost accounting, tax accounting, sales accounting, or the general ledger alone when it is not the sole component of the accounting system. Responsibility for an account segment could then also include responsibility for the reports and statements generated from a specific accounting activity and perhaps for any "procedural instructions" involved in its maintenance. (Care should be taken to distinguish those positions whose sole or main responsibility is the procedural component, since such "systems accountants" who design and improve accounting systems are excluded from the BLS definitions.)

10. What is a stable system; how and why are systems changed?

10a. Because an accounting system exists to provide financial information about the organization it serves, changes in the make-up or requirements of that entity may require periodic changes in its accounting system. New accounts may be added to the system's "chart of accounts" to cover new functions, products, or management's information needs.

Change in an organization, however, is not the only reason for accounting system change. It is an accountant's duty to constantly study the assigned system, or segment thereof, and recommend changes to improve it. Thus, an accountant may recommend adding a new account to provide more detailed information about existing transactions; or accounting controls may be instituted to reconcile allied, but separately maintained record systems; or changes in instructions may be made for greater systems workability; etc.

Whether due to external organizational demands or to internal accounting analysis, there is room for change in accounting systems. The more dynamic, changing, large, or otherwise complex an organization is, the more its accounting structure may require change. On the other hand, the more static, well-established, small or otherwise simple the organization, the more likely that its accounting system will be more stable.

Thus, a stable system is one which does not present a pattern of substantial changes affecting the accountant's work. This stability occurs because the functions and work processes of the operating programs being served are themselves stable, i.e., they are subject to only minor changes. Stable programs are usually either administrative in nature (e.g., such that most transactions involve payments for salaries, travel, office, and equipment) or involve such simple industrial, financial, commercial or other operations and transactions that well-established principles, methods and practices of accounting apply and therefore present few or no significantly difficult accounting problems.

11. What are the key differences between Accountant V and Accountant VI? The differences between the terms used in the two levels, e.g., "complex" (IV and V) vs. "unusually complex" (VI) and "no-clear-cut precedents" (V) vs. "unique or nonrecurring" (VI) are not that clear.

11a. Accountants V and VI perform similar work, but there are differences in their degree of responsibility. Accountants V participate in developing, revising, and implementing accounting systems and procedures; level VI accountants have full technical authority to establish and implement such systems and procedures. Accountant V is the first level of operating accounting work that extends significantly beyond the maintenance of accounting systems to systems development. Level V Accountants develop less than entire complex systems while Level VI Accountants develop either entire complex systems or those in a specialty area (e.g., cost accounting) of a particularly large organization where a high degree of technical expertise is required. Accountant VI is a less common level than Accountant V. Examples of assignments (c) shows that accountants V can sometimes be found in stable, conventional, accounting systems (e.g., those requiring few, if any, Accountant IV's); Accountants VI, however, exist in only complex systems. The examples of assignments provided at level VI indicate (but do not require) that Accountants VI supervise the work of Accountants V. In example (a), Accountants VI supervise a large and complex accounting system; in example (b) they supervise a major segment of an unusually complex accounting system. Both of the systems described in examples (a) and (b) are expected to include Accountants V.

12. How do the Accountant and Chief Accountant levels relate to each other?

12a. As indicated in table D-1 of the WCP bulletin, the following occupational levels have equivalent duties and responsibilities: Accountant IV and Chief Accountant I; Accountant V and Chief Accountant II, and Accountant VI and Chief Accountant III. Therefore, the typical reporting relationships between the Accountant and the Chief Accountant series are: Accountant III reports to Chief Accountant I; Accountant IV reports to Chief Accountant II; Accountant V reports to Chief Accountant III; and Accountant VI reports to Chief Accountant IV. It is unlikely that an accountant will report to a chief accountant of equivalent level (e.g., Accountant V reporting to a Chief Accountant II). Accountants will sometimes, however, report to chief accountant two equivalent levels above them (e.g., Accountant V reporting to a Chief Accountant IV); in these instances, there is usually not a normal progression from the Accountant V to the Chief Accountant IV position. Such unusual reporting relationships between the accountant and the chief accountant series must be well supported in the SO-132.

3. What levels of accountants are usually found in medium and large size hospitals?

3a. Due to the nature of hospital accounting systems, it is typical to find the full-working level of accountant at level II reporting to a level III or IV match. Medium and large sized hospitals handle a large volume of accounting transactions using established procedures.

CHIEF ACCOUNTANTS

1. What is the distinction between (a) accountants who are in charge of the day-to-day operations of an entire accounting system of a subordinate establishment, and (b) chief accountants with AR-1 or 2 (the levels of authority and responsibility that generally apply in organizational units other than central headquarters?

1a. To be classified as a chief accountant, the accounting program supervised must include, at a minimum, general accounting and at least one other major accounting activity (typically cost accounting, tax accounting, property accounting, etc.). The chief accountant must also have all three of the major responsibilities listed in the introduction to this series. If the scope of the program or required responsibilities do not meet these criteria, the person in charge of the accounting system may match the accountant series. The term "day-to-day operation," as used in the accountant definitions, is also a distinguishing factor since it describes a much more limited type of authority than would normally be required of a chief accountant.

2. Comment on the paragraph immediately preceding "Criteria for Matching Chief Accountants by Level" (in the job description booklet) dealing with limitations of the number of professional accountants supervised in determining levels at which chief accountants are classified.

2a. Classification must be based primarily on the authority and responsibility and technical complexity elements of the definition. Only where there are extreme variations from the designated numbers and levels of professional accountants supervised should the factor affect the decision as to level match. (The single exception to this general rule is described in the next question.

3. For chief accountants with AR-3 and TC-1, the only distinction between levels II and III is the size of the subordinate professional staff. This seems to be in conflict with the definition, which states that this latter factor is to be considered of secondary importance in the matching process.

3a. It is recognized that a conflict exists in this particular situation. The reason for establishing "size of staff" as a primary distinguishing criterion for this particular group of employees was as follows:

> Prior to 1963, all persons with full responsibility for accounting systems at the headquarters level (AR-3) could match only level III or higher. This included chief accountants of relatively small organizations with quite simple accounting systems, as well as those in much larger organizations whose accounting systems, although much more extensive, could still be evaluated as TC-1. It was determined, based on tests, that AR-3 chief accountants of

the smaller organizations could be identified satisfactorily by the size of their subordinate staffs. This avoided the introduction of additional criteria, such as employment size of establishment, that might not be applicable in certain situations, and could not be used for distinguishing other levels. Therefore, the third combination of factors (AR3, TC1, 1 or 2 subordinate accountants) was provided for level II.

For chief accountants with this combination of factors, the size of subordinate staff limitations must be closely observed. If there are only one or two subordinate professional accountants, the level will be II; if there are three or more, the level will be III.

4. Can a chief accountant be classified in an establishment that has a comptroller, who has overall responsibility for the accounting system as well as other duties, such as budgeting?

4a. Yes, a chief accountant often reports to an official such as a comptroller. Although this reporting relationship is not specifically stated in the definitions, it is implied in item 3 in the introductory portion of the definition, i.e., "Providing directly or through an official such as a comptroller, advisory services to top management officials......"

. In the definition of AR2, it states that this level can be found in some headquarters situations. Under what circumstances could this factor?

a. One example might be where the comptroller, or some other official, becomes so involved with the direction of the accounting program as to limit the chief accountant's authority and responsibility below what would usually be expected of this position in a company or government (AR3). In even rarer instances, the higher level official may participate so extensively in the direction of the accounting program that the chief accountant would lack the required responsibility "1" and, therefore, would not match.

Referring to the "exclusions" paragraph in the chief accountant definition, should a position with responsibility for preparing budget recommendations for the accounting unit be excluded, if simultaneously taking responsibility for organization, methods, or procedures studies within the incumbent's organizations, but not for other segments of the establishments?

. The management responsibility described in requirement (2) is such that a match for chief accountant could be made if the incumbent has any or all of these functions, provided they are limited to the accounting system.

Please explain the exclusion for work measurement and methods and procedures studies.

7a. Work measurement and methods and procedures studies are management analysis concepts designed to improve operating efficiency. they are non-accounting functions sometimes assigned to a comptroller or to a similar position.

8. What is a budget? What type of budgeting may a Chief Accountant do and what type is excluded from the BLS definition?

8a. A budget is a financial statement of estimated income and expenses of organization for a period of time. The most difficult part of budgeting is the decision-making process (e.g., helping to decide budget levels, or making recommendations regarding the worthiness of purchases proposed by operating departments). Therefore, budget decision making is regarded as a non-accounting function and usually involves significant pay factors (i.e., reason for exclusion from the BLS definition). Budget preparation and budget analysis are less difficult elements of budgeting and, it they do not constitute a significant portion of the Chief Accountant's responsibility, are usually permissible under the BLS definition. Budget preparation is self-explanatory. Budget analysis involves comparing projected income and expenses with actual results and reconciling the differences.

9. How should definitions for Accountants and Chief Accountants be applied to regulated industries? Do these industries generate pay factors not contained in the BLS definitions?

9a. Survey definitions for these occupations should be applied in regulated industries the same as in other industries. There appear to be no significant industry pay factors for these jobs which are not present in the BLS definitions. Regulations define the end product of an accounting system, not the system itself. Company accounting personnel develop and operate accounting systems in such a manner as to provide their officials and the regulatory agencies with the accounting information needed for decision making.

10. What is meant by the "one other major accounting activity, typically tax accounting, cost accounting, property accounting, sales accounting, etc." referred to in the Chief Account definitions?

10a. This phrase insures that the accounting program is sufficiently complex to merit matching to the Chief Accountant rather than the Accountant definition. Thus, the program must include at least general accounting and one other substantial accounting activity such as sales, cost, property, tax, public utilities, or inventory accounting, etc. These are some of the various accounting specialities; those listed in the definition are the most common specialities. Areas such as accounts receivable, accounts payable, payroll, etc., are not considered separate major accounting activities, but are rather a part of adjunct to the general accounting system. Every accounting system contains at a minimum the general ledger which is set up to record an control general accounting items, such as assets, liabilities, income, expense, and capital accounts. Accounting programs of many organizations, however, are expanded to include another set or sets of books to record the same financial information controlled by the general ledger in yet another way. This is done to meet more specific information needs than are addressed by the general ledger. For example, cost accounting defines all transactions in terms of cost: The cost of a product, of a department, of a function, or a territory, etc. This is helpful to management in making decisions where cost is a factor (e.g., estimating the cost of goods sold) or assisting in cost minimization by allowing examination of cost components. Tax accountants devise ledgers to record, control, and summarize date in terms of tax liability and tax reporting requirements. Some organization's property holdings may be sufficiently large or complex that separate property accounting records are deemed advisable.

11. Since "patient accounting" in hospitals qualifies as another "major accounting activity" under the BLS definition, why are few hospital chief accountants matched?

11a. The scarcity of chief accountant matches in hospitals stems from the stability of hospital accounting systems. Accordingly, the top technical expert in hospital accounting and the position responsible for both patient and general accounting is usually an officer, such as V.P.-Finance, having significant responsibilities for non-accounting functions (e.g., budgeting, financial analysis).

12. Is there a correlation between the TC levels and the levels of accountants supervised?

12a. Yes. As indicated in the chart at the end of the definition chief accountants matched at TC-1 supervise mostly Accountants III; those matched at TC-2 supervise a significant number of Accountants IV and perhaps some V's and VI's. The TC definitions closely parallel the accountant definitions, i.e., the wording in TC-1, 2, and 3 is similar to that in Accountant III, IV and V respectively.

13. Since AR-1 is "typically found at a plant an similar subordinate establishment," can AR-1 matches be made at intermediate organization levels? At headquarters?

13a. AR-1 matches can be made at division or subsidiary offices but they are out of the ordinary and therefore should be well-supported in the SO-132, e.g., indicating reporting relationships to the next highest accounting level and dispelling doubt about who is the top technical expert in accounting for the establishment. AR-1 chief accountants are not typically found at corporate headquarters, as the top technical expert in accounting for a company does not work with an accounting system that "has been prescribed in considerable detail by a higher level in the company".

14. Should accountants and chief accountants who are responsible for the investment of funds be excluded from the WCP definition?

14a. When funds investment is complicated (e.g., long-term investments by insurance companies retirement funds), such positions should be excluded as performing non-operating accounting functions. Accountants and Chief Accountants who as a part of their duties, make decisions regarding routine short-term investments, are matchable, providing that these duties do not constitute a pay factor. Such matchable position can be found in government organizations which receive and invest their operating funds at the beginning of each fiscal year.

AUDITORS

1. Can members of the team assisting the person in charge of an audit in levels III and IV be professional accountants assigned for a specific audit?

1a. If the classified auditor has the responsibilities designated in the definition, members of the accounting staff may serve as assistants for a specific audit. These individuals may be considered to be "subordinate auditors" even though they themselves would be classifiable as accountants.

2. In applying the BLS auditor definition in some establishments (e.g., some banks and other financial institutions), there seems to be a conflict between the leveling elements (i.e., introductory paragraphs, general characteristics, direction received, and typical duties and responsibilities) of the definition. For example, Auditors are encountered: Performing level II work in terms of "typical duties and responsibilities" but functioning as team leaders for Auditors I; or otherwise performing level III level work except that they have such level IV responsibilities as planning and conducting a variety of audits that are characteristic of level III. How should the BLS definition be interpreted in such instances?

2a. When a conflict occurs between the leveling elements of the BLS auditor definition, the match must be consistent with both the complexity of the audit work performed, as defined under "typical duties and responsibilities" at each BLS level and the introduction to the BLS auditor definition. For example: Auditors responsible for planning and conducting a variety of III level audits should be matched at level III; auditors performing level II work but functioning as team leaders should be matched at level II; and bank auditors who fit all of the level III characteristics and duties but who do not examine items in financial statements and reports (e.g., balance sheet items), because the audited bank components lack complete accounting systems, should be excluded.

3. Should "external" auditors be matched (e.g., hospital insurance plan auditors who audit hospitals; State and local government auditors who audit private agencies contracting for public funds)?

3a. No. Auditors described by the WCP definition are "internal", as they audit the accounting records of their employer. State government auditors (e.g., those working for a State's Auditor General and auditing the accounting records of various State agencies) are interpreted as being "internal" auditors.

4. Should auditors be matched who primarily conduct "specific purpose" financial audits at management's request (e.g., to investigate suspected fraud)?

4a. No. Auditors described by the WCP definition are assigned to ongoing financial audit programs. The purpose of their audits are similar to, and may also be subordinate to, those conducted by public accounting firms.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

1. What is meant by concurrent audits, as referred to in the Public Accountant exclusion note?

1a. Concurrent audits are those preformed by two or more separate teams in separate locations at the same time. Such concurrent audits tend to occur when auditing large corporations or conglomerates having separate and distinct subsidiaries, or when auditing other dispersed organizations or functions, e.g.:

- Organizations with intercompany affiliations and relationships complicating their capital and debt structure, and financing.

- Securities and debt operations that require integrated analysis of transactions in bank located throughout the country.

- Prime contractors who have numerous sub-contractors using different accounting systems.

The exclusion refers to public accountants who must review and often consolidate the findings of such dispersed and separate audit teams. It does not refer to auditors who are completing final papers on one audit, while having already started work on another audit.

PERSONNEL SPECIALISTS AND PERSONNEL SUPERVISORS/MANAGERS

1. Can you provide more guidance concerning when to match supervisory personnel professionals to the personnel specialist definition? Why are we matching supervisory establishment positions to a WCP specialist job title? Is there a precedent in the WCP survey for such a contradictory job title.

1a. Your first priority is to match supervisory personnel professionals to the personnel specialist series. Positions should be matched as personnel supervisors/managers only when they lack the technical duties necessary for matching to the specialist series. We are matching supervisory establishment positions to a specialist definition due to the leanness of most personnel department staffing patterns. In many instances, establishment positions titled "supervisor" and "manager" are primarily technical in nature. These positions are usually responsible for supervising or managing functions, although they may have a small subordinate staff.

The precedent for matching establishment positions titled "supervisor" and "manager" to a specialist job title is found in the WCP accountant definition. Establishment accounting supervisors, managers, and directors are matched to the accountant definition based on their technical duties and responsibilities.

2. ☞ Can you provide more practical guidance in distinguishing between matches for personnel specialist and personnel supervisor/manager?

2a. Establishment positions matched to the personnel supervisor/manager definition must have full supervisory responsibility for at least three (3) subordinates. Once this requirement of the definition has been satisfied, field representatives must use judgment in deciding between matches to the personnel specialist and personnel supervisor/manager definitions.

When deciding between matches to these two WCP definitions, consider both the size and type of staff supervised. Size of staff relates to a manager's typical span of supervisory control. Managers having only one or two subordinates normally have significant technical responsibilities; those having 3-5 subordinates must generally maintain a balance between technical and supervisory responsibilities; and managerial positions having six (6) or more subordinates are primarily supervisory in nature.

For establishment supervisory positions having 3-5 subordinates, consider the type of staff supervised. Supervision of professional staff usually requires more administrative support than supervision of clerical staff. Therefore, if you need guidance, lean toward matching supervisors of three or more professionals in the personnel supervisor/manager series.

3. ☞ Is personnel specialist an appropriate WCP job title for an occupational series that is designed to survey both generalists and specialists?

3a. The WCP job title "personnel specialist" was patterned after generic job titles used in large organizations, including state and local governments. This WCP job title is obviously more difficult to apply in small establishments. Please provide recommendations for a job title change in your end-of-survey reports and we will consider them.

4. ☞ Is it the intent of the personnel specialist and personnel supervisor/manager definitions to exclude few, if any, personnel professionals from the WCP survey?

4a. Yes. These generic definitions are designed to match all establishment personnel professionals except those specifically excluded.

5. ☞ Where should we match establishment personnel managers (not matching the director of personnel definition) who either have less than three subordinates or have base levels below personnel specialist III?

5a. Personnel managers not matching the director of personnel definition, and having less than three subordinates, should be matched to the personnel specialist series. If these personnel managers have three or more subordinates, they should either be matched as personnel specialists (see Q & A #2), personnel supervisor/managers (based on their technical expertise),or excluded (if they have large staffs but technical skills below personnel specialist IV).

6. ☞ How should exclusions "d" and "e" in the personnel specialist definition be applied in large establishments which have a number of specialized personnel-related functions? Exclusion "d" refers to specialists with matchable titles which are not part of the establishment's personnel program. Exclusion "e" refers to specialists in other occupations, even if these positions are part of the establishment's personnel program.

6a. Establishment organization charts are essential in determining both matches and exclusions to the personnel specialist and personnel supervisor/manager definitions. Organization charts can help identify positions outside the personnel department with personnel-related titles, as well as specialists in other occupations within the personnel department. Once potential exclusions have been identified, establishment job descriptions and/or respondent knowledge are needed to determine the background and experience requirements of the suspect positions.

7. ☞ What is the rationale behind exclusion "e" of the personnel specialist definition which excludes training specialist positions requiring an education background? Should establishment training and development specialist positions be matched if a personnel background is required? How can we match or exclude training/training and development specialists on the basis of their qualifications without access to their personnel files?

7a. There is a separate Federal OPM job standard for training specialist. Therefore,training specialist/manager positions primarily requiring an education background are excluded from the WCP personnel specialist and personnel supervisor/manager definitions. Establishment training and development positions requiring a personnel background are usually responsible for identifying employee training and development needs, as well as for planning and/or conducting training programs. Such positions are generally matchable to the personnel specialist and personnel supervisor/manager definitions. Remember to match or exclude training/training and development positions based on their job requirements, rather than on the individual qualifications of the incumbents.

8. Both the personnel specialist and the personnel supervisor/manager definitions exclude labor relations positions responsible for negotiating with unions as the principal representative of their overall organization. What is meant by the term overall organization?

8a. The term overall organization refers to the entire organization (e.g., parent corporation and all subsidiaries). Therefore, not all labor relations specialists/managers should be excluded. Positions responsible for negotiating a portion of a contract (e.g., plant guards, local provisions of a national contract), are generally matchable.

9. ☞ The personnel specialist and personnel supervisor/manager definitions exclude labor relations positions primarily responsible for negotiating labor contracts as the principal representative of their overall organizations. Does this exclusion apply to establishment personnel managers and directors who, as part of their duties, also negotiate labor contracts as the principal representative of their overall organizations?

9a. The exclusions from the WCP personnel specialist and personnel supervisor/manager definitions apply to labor relations positions primarily responsible for negotiating union contracts. The exclusions do not typically apply to establishment personnel generalists who negotiate union contracts.

10. ☞ Should establishment positions otherwise matching the WCP personnel specialist or personnel supervisor/manager definition, but also having significant responsibility for the establishment's payroll function,be matched or excluded?

10a. Field representatives must use judgment in deciding to match or exclude establishment personnel positions that have payroll responsibility. Establishment positions should be excluded from the WCP personnel definitions when responsibility for payroll is a significant pay determinant (see exclusion "e" for personnel specialist). Consult your survey manager if you are unclear whether to match or exclude establishment personnel positions having significant payroll responsibility.

11. ☞ Can you provide us with job matching concepts that will help in describing the differences in duties and responsibilities between the five WCP levels of "operations" personnel specialist?

11a. Personnel specialist I is a trainee. Level II (operations) performs standard procedural duties using a knowledge of personnel management principles and techniques. Level III (operations) performs moderately complex assignments following established policies and guidelines, and recommends the solution to conventional, precedented problems. Level IV (operations) applies to three (3) different work situations: In situation #1, positions are responsible for solving complex technical problems (see Q & A # 12); situation # 2 combines level III technical skills with comprehensive management advisory services (see Q & A # 15); and situation # 3 applies to positions responsible for rendering final decisions on moderately complex problems (see Q and A # 16).

Level V (operations) applies to two (2) different work situations: In situation # 1, specialists participate in developing and revising personnel policies and procedures; situation # 2 combines responsibilities for solving complex technical problems (as described at level IV) with comprehensive management advisory services. Level VI has no provisions for "operations" personnel specialists.

12. ☞ Can you help us in assessing the complexity of establishment positions matched to the WCP personnel specialist definition? These assessments are particularly important in distinguishing between "moderately complex" assignments at level III and "complex" assignments at level IV. Establishment definitions of "complex" personnel functions vary. Depending on the establishment , the term "complex " is used to describe responsibility for an unusually large volume of work, for multiple personnel functions, or for decision making authority.

12a. "Complexity" is used in the WCP personnel specialist definition to describe problem solving responsibilities. Moderately complex problems have precedents; complex problems require more technical knowledge and creativity for their solution.

Establishment definitions for "complexity" should be analyzed in terms of the WCP personnel specialist definition. Responsibility for an unusually large program may (or may not) require creative problem solving.

13. ☞ How do we differentiate in level between a position matching the personnel specialist series that analyzes or recruits for difficult non-exempt jobs and one that analyzes or recruits for common exempt jobs? Both types of positions may carry the same establishment grade or evaluation points.

13a. Distinctions in levels for the WCP personnel specialist definition should be based on the job matching concepts discussed in Q and A # 11. Reliance on the complexity of jobs serviced by establishment personnel professionals will not insure correct level matching to the personnel specialist definition.

14. ☞ Why do WCP personnel specialist levels distinguish between operations, program evaluation, and program development duties? Most establishments don't make these distinctions in their personnel job series. When an establishment position combines operations duties with either program evaluation or program development responsibilities, how should WCP levels be determined?

14a. Program evaluation and program development, as used in the WCP personnel specialist definition, are responsibilities generally identifiable only in headquarters of large organizations . Establishment positions which combine operations duties with program evaluation or development should be matched as operations, unless program evaluation or development responsibilities are significant pay factors. WCP personnel specialist matches based on program evaluation or development options require thorough documentation.

15. ☞ What does the term "comprehensive managementadvisory services" mean, as used in the personnel specialist IV and V definitions?

15a. Most positions matched to the WCP personnel specialist definition provide advice to management by answering specific technical questions regarding their personnel specialty. "Comprehensive management advisory services" refers to technical advice given by personnel specialists regarding the solution of broad personnel management problems (e.g. reorganizations). These technical solutions require personnel specialists to approach problems from a total personnel management viewpoint, exploring both organizational needs and management objectives.

If you match establishment positions with responsibilities for providing comprehensive management advisory services, please give detailed documentation.

16. ☞ Can you provide guidance in identifying establishment matches for WCP personnel specialist IV "who are solely responsible for performing moderately complex assignments and for rendering final decisions on assigned personnel matters under general

supervision"? Please explain why this aspect of the personnel specialist IV definition would not normally apply to matching establishment personnel managers in hotel chains.

16a. Establishment matches to WCP personnel specialist IV which are "solely responsible for rendering final decisions on assigned personnel matters" can usually be identified from establishment organization charts and reporting relationships. Look for positions either reporting directly to policy-makers (e.g., vice-presidents) or reporting to matches for director of personnel III/IV.

Personnel managers in establishments which are part of a "chain" are not always delegated final decision-making authority for establishment personnel matters. Therefore, WCP personnel specialist IV matches in "chain establishments" should be well documented.

17. ☞ The personnel specialist definition covers a wide variety of personnel specialty functions. Can you provide more specific examples of duties by job level in each of the various specialty areas?

17a. Accurate level distinctions for WCP personnel specialists cannot be consistently determined by using examples of work assignments. Duties that are "moderately complex" in one establishment may be "routine" in another establishment. Please use the concepts described in the personnel specialist definition and in Q and A # 11 to determine level distinctions. Consult your survey manager with problems.

18. ☞ What criteria should we use to either match or exclude recruiters who recruit for one specific job and are not required to have a personnel background? These recruiters may be found both in and outside of an establishment's personnel department.

18a. Establishment recruiting positions that require both a personnel background and the use of personnel management principles and techniques should be matched to the WCP personnel specialist definition. Establishment recruiting positions which do not require a personnel background (e.g., engineers recruiting for other engineers) should be excluded from the WCP personnel specialist series.

19. ☞ Why do we survey so few personnel specialist I's? Trainee positions for the other WCP professional/ administrative jobs are more heavily populated.

19a. Matches for the WCP personnel specialist I definition (trainees) are rare due to private sector hiring and promotion policies for personnel professionals. Matches for WCP personnel specialist II and III are heavily populated with both former clericals/paraprofessionals and with establishment transfers from other occupations.

20. ☞ How can we distinguish between personnel clerk IV and personnel specialist II matches?. Specific duties performed by these two WCP positions are often very similar.

20a. Distinctions between matches for the WCP personnel specialist II and personnel clerk IV definitions should be based on the intent of establishment positions. Positions matching personnel specialist II require knowledge of personnel principles and techniques, usually gained through advanced education. Professional positions are often part of an establishment's professional career ladder. Clerical and technical positions typically have lower educational requirements, and require knowledge of establishment personnel procedures, rather than personnel principles and techniques.

21. ☞ When the entire personnel function in a small to medium sized establishment is handled by one position (which matches the WCP personnel specialist series), what responsibilities of the position will raise the match above level III?

21a. " Stand-alone " personnel positions matched to the WCP personnel specialist series are potential matches for level IV if the position either provides "comprehensive management advisory services" (see Q and A # 15) or renders final decisions on assigned personnel matters under general supervision (see Q and A # 16). Positions having significant responsibility for developing personnel policies and procedures for their establishment should be matched at level V.

22. Can we match an establishment position at personnel specialist V without having a match at level IV?

22a. Yes. The leanness of many personnel organizations tends to reduce the number of personnel specialist levels, and sometimes prevents a smooth progression from level I to level V.

A common example of skipping from level III to V can be found in the employment function of a medium sized establishment having a moderately complex work force. The technical work, in this instance, could be performed by a couple of level III specialists who report to an employment manager. The position of "employment manager" could conceivably match at level V, if it contains significant responsibility for developing and modifying establishment employment policies and procedures.

23. ☞ Under what circumstances can a match at personnel specialist V be derived from a combination of personnel specialist IV level duties?

23a. Establishment positions having a wide variety of WCP personnel specialist IV duties can be matched at level V if they are responsible for either providing "comprehensive management advisory services" (see Q and A # 15) or for developing and revising establishment personnel policies and procedures.

24. ☞ Why is it necessary to have a separate WCP series for personnel supervisor/manager? Why not fold the personnel supervisor/manager series into the personnel specialist definition?

24a. The WCP definition for personnel supervisors/managers spans GS levels 11-15. The WCP definition for personnel specialist is based on Federal OPM standards covering GS levels 5-13. Folding the WCP definition for personnel supervisor/manager into the personnel specialist definition would require the loss of salary data for personnel supervisor/manager IV and V, two important WCP job levels.

25. When, if ever, can the base level for personnel supervisor/manager include only one worker? The WCP definition for base level of work requires two workers (including vacancies).

25a. ☞ The base level for personnel supervisor/manager can incorporate one worker only if the first level of supervisor/manager has a technical level of expertise (as measured by the personnel specialist definition) higher than the worker at the base level

26. The personnel supervisor/manager definition requires that all matched positions supervise three or more personnel specialists or clerks. How rigidly should we hold to this requirement?

26a. Quite rigidly. Establishment positions designed to supervise less than three subordinates are not primarily supervisory in nature and should not be matched to the personnel supervisor/manager definition.

Establishment positions with large numbers of incumbents may include some individuals matching the personnel specialist definition and some matching the personnel supervisor/manager definition. In these instances, match the establishment position to either the personnel specialist or the personnel supervisor/manager definition.

27. ☞ Question and answer # 25 allows the matching of establishment positions to the WCP personnel supervisor/manager series when the establishment position has only one worker at it's base level. Does this interpretation contradict Q&A # 26, which confirms the requirement that positions matched to the WCP personnel supervisor/manager series must supervise at least three subordinates?

27a. The base level of an establishment position matched to the WCP personnel/supervisor manager definition refers to the highest establishment level among the subordinate staff which accounts for at least 25 percent of the total staff supervised. There is no contradiction between the "base level concept" and Q and A #26.

28. At LS-1,2, and 3 of the personnel supervisor/manager definition, the size of the staff supervised is specified. How should matching proceed if the staff size is substantially larger than expected?

28a. Deviations from the expected staff size will be encountered and in some cases the deviations will be large. Such jobs should be closely scrutinized, but if they otherwise fit the definition they should be matched.

29. ☞ When we are unable to determine the exact number of subordinates reporting to an establishment position which matches the WCP personnel supervisor/manager definition, what techniques can we use to determine the supervisor/manager's base level .

29a. When you are unable to determine the number of subordinates reporting to an establishment position which matches the WCP personnel supervisor/manager definition, the base level concept is not applicable. In these instances, match the establishment position to the WCP personnel supervisor/manager definition based on the position's level of technical expertise.

30. How can we distinguish between positions matchable to the personnel supervisor/manager definition, and those matchable to the director of personnel definition?

30a. Positions matched to the director of personnel definition must include a significant responsibility for the following functions:

1. Job evaluation;
2. Employment and placement; and
3. Employee relations and services.

However, responsibility for these three functions does not insure a director of personnel match. WCP director of personnel matches must also:

4. "Direct a personnel program for an organization or segment of an organization";
5. "Serve top management officials as the source of advice on personnel management matters and problems" (see paragraph 1 of the director of personnel definition); and
6. Conform to the organizational reporting relationship described in paragraph 2 of the director of personnel definition and clarified in Q&A's numbers 6 and 15.

Positions not meeting all of the requirements of the director of personnel definition should be matched to either the personnel supervisor/manager or the personnel specialist definition

31. ☞ Why do the WCP personnel supervisor/manager and director of personnel definitions equate to the same GS levels. Shouldn't a director of personnel equate to a higher WCP level than a personnel supervisor/ manager?

31a. The WCP definitions for personnel supervisor/manager and director of personnel were developed using different job matching criteria, but both definitions equate to the same Federal GS levels (11-15). When matches for both WCP directors of personnel and personnel supervisors/managers are made within the same establishment, positions matched to the personnel supervisor/manager definition typically report to a position matched to the WCP director of personnel definition. In these instances, director of personnel matches should equate to a higher WCP level than matches for the subordinate personnel supervisors/managers.

32. ☞ In some establishments, a reasonable correlation between establishment grades/evaluation points is missing for different establishment positions matched to the personnel supervisor/manager and director of personnel definitions. Sometimes both supervisors/managers and the director of personnel to whom they report are matched at the same equivalent WCP level. In other establishments, a position matched to the WCP director of personnel definition may be assigned only a slightly higher establishment grade/evaluation than a position matched to the personnel supervisor/manager series, but the director is matched three WCP levels higher. Why do these misalignments in establishment in establishment grades/evaluation points occur between these two similar WCP personnel series? What procedures and job matching techniques can we use, in these instances, to insure a more logical alignment.

32a. Misalignments in establishment grades/evaluation points between WCP personnel supervisor/manager and director of personnel matches are generally derived from weaknesses in the WCP director of personnel definition. The federal OPM job standard from which the director of personnel definition was derived includes subtle classification criteria which are not included in the WCP definition.

Report severe misalignments in establishment grades/evaluation points between WCP personnel supervisor/manager and director of personnel matches to your survey manager, along with your suggestions for changing your director of personnel match. Your survey manager will verify arbitrary matching changes with Washington staff.

33. ☞ In determining the WCP level of a personnel supervisor/manager match, we rely heavily on anomaly "a". Routinely matching personnel supervisors/ managers based on their level of technical expertise is a cumbersome way of arriving at a match and it is a difficult process to explain to respondents. Are there any alternatives methods for achieving federal/private pay comparisons for the personnel supervisor/manager series?

33a. There are currently no acceptable alternative WCP definitions for surveying personnel supervisors/managers (see Q and A # 24).

34. Why is there nearly a $20,000 (32 percent) pay gap between 1989 WCP salaries reported for personnel supervisors/managers II and ☞ III?

34a. The unusually large pay gap between WCP personnel supervisors/managers II and III can be correlated to industry and size differences of establishments providing salary data for these two occupational levels.

DIRECTORS OF PERSONNEL

1. Must an organization have one or more job analysts to have a job evaluation system as required in item (a) in the director of personnel definition?

1a. A job evaluation system meeting the definition requirement can exist even though there is no full-time job analyst. However, job analysis of the kind described must be identifiable in the organization and must be a significant responsibility of the director of personnel.

2. Might the operation of a committee for job evaluation headed by the director of personnel be evidence of a formal job evaluation system for which the director is responsible?

2a. If the committee's evaluation is based upon the general approach to job evaluation stated in the definition, the existence of the committee headed by the director of personnel could fulfill requirement (1). If, on the other hand, the committee makes its judgments on the basis of informal discussions of each individual's qualifications, this activity would not constitute a formal job evaluation system meeting the definition requirement. Moreover, the role of the director of personnel in the committee activity may be the determining factor in deciding whether or not the DOP is responsible for a system as described. For example, analysis of the jobs studied by the committee may be the director's primary function and responsibility to the committee.

3. Do job evaluation systems meeting the requirements of item (1) in the director of personnel definition typically include grades, rate ranges, or evaluation points for different occupational series?

3a. Yes. One advantage of a job evaluation system is the ability to compare the difficulty of a job in one occupational series with a job in another series. Without some vehicle (e.g., grades, rate ranges, or evaluation points), these comparisons are not possible. Note, however, that not all organizations having grades and/or rate ranges have job evaluation systems as defined in item (1) of the director of personnel definition. For example, organizations which base grades and rate ranges primarily on salary survey data without ranking them in terms of duties, responsibilities and qualification requirements are not considered to have job evaluation systems. (Also see questions 1 and 4.)

4. What is a "substantial proportion" of the jobs in an organization as designated in the last sentence of function (1) of the director of personnel definition?

4a. Enough employees should be covered by the system so that the job analysis function is clearly recognizable, requires more than occasional effort, and is one of the significant responsibilities of the director of personnel.

5. Can a director of personnel who, on occasion, services a few "difficult" jobs be considered as having a "type A" organization?

5a. Yes. The decision to consider the organization as "type A" or "type B" must be based on a judgment as to the effect on the personnel workload and the director's responsibility caused by the "difficult" jobs. Judgment is required because the definition provide for some latitude in determining the scope of the "difficult" jobs.

6. Can a director of personnel at headquarters be the "...source of advice and assistance on personnel management matters and problems generally" if reporting to a policy making official (e.g., vice-president) responsible for personnel or personnel and administration?

6a. When a personnel director at headquarters reports to a "vice-president" in charge of personnel or personnel and administration, a decision to match or exclude the personnel director usually relates to organization complexity. In complex and unique organizations (e.g., large conglomerates), the personnel director may function as the top advisor for personnel matters, while the vice-president develops overall policy relating to administration. However, in industries such as health care, banking, and retail trade where precedents exist for many personnel policies and procedures, the top advisor on personnel matters is likely to be a vice-president, even though the personnel director may develop recommendations. In these instances, consider matching the vice-president to the WCP director of personnel definition and the personnel director to either the WCP personnel specialist or personnel supervisor/manager definition.

7. If the director of personnel does not service as entire organization, what conditions should classify the director as having a "development level" personnel program?

7a. See paragraph (b) in footnote 2 of the definition, which describes the development level personnel program.

8. Should the level of a director of personnel match be changed solely on the basis of an employment change?

8a. A change is employment alone should not cause an automatic change in the level of match. If the employment change is likely to be permanent (e.g., an organizational unit is transferred to another location), reconsider all elements of the definition in rematching the job. It may be found, for example, that the transferred unit includes the occupations which made the organization serviced "Type B" instead of "Type A".

9. Since the scope of the WCP survey includes establishments with fewer than 250 employees, does this affect the minimum employment guidelines in the definition for director of personnel?

9a. No. However, there are rare situations in which an organization with fewer than 250 workers may yield a match. For example, an establishment may have fewer than 250 employees at the time of the survey, but normally may employ more workers. Matches may also be found at establishments of fewer than 250 workers when the employees considered for matching serves other organizational segments at other locations.

10. Is a person with the title of "manager of industrial relations" likely to be classified as a director of personnel?

10a. No. Industry usage generally reserves this title for officials who have prime responsibilities for union contract negotiations. Occasionally, an employee under such an official's direction will meet the requirements for the BLS director of personnel. Full exploration of the job description should still be undertaken, however, as titles are often misleading.

11. Does responsibility for actual contract negotiation with a labor union as the principal representative of the organization automatically exclude an individual from being classified as a director of personnel? To what extent can participation in bargaining be exercised within the scope of the definition?

11a. The principal negotiator should be excluded only if this responsibility "....is a significant aspect of the job, i.e., a responsibility which serves as a primary basis for qualification requirements or compensation." In other words, the excluded positions are those that either 1) require a strong labor relations background or 2) receive additional pay for negotiation responsibilities. Personnel generalists performing contract negotiations who do not fit one of the above exclusions are potential matches.

12. A director of personnel has duties additional to those listed in the BLS definition, such as public relations, community relations, etc. Should such additional duties rule out a match?

12a. Such duties should rule out a match if they comprise a significant portion of the duties performed or are a significant factor in determining compensation. Additional duties which are incidental to the job and have only minor, if any, influence on compensation, should not preclude a match.

13. "Type B" organization serviced specifies that a "substantial proportion" of the jobs in the organization present difficult recruitment, job evaluation, or training problems. What constitutes a "substantial proportion?"

13a. In this instance, a "substantial proportion" of jobs in considered to be about 20 percent (or more).

14. "Type B" includes establishments where at least 20 percent of the jobs "consist of hard-to understand work processes; have hard to match skill requirements; are in new or emerging occupations; or are extremely hard to fill." Can extremely hard to fill jobs include common occupations if the supply is inadequate locally and workers must be attracted on a regional or nationwide basis? Do "hard to understand work processes" refer to conventional industries such as banking, insurance, health care or manufacturing?

14a. No. Hiring extremely hard to fill positions requires a technical knowledge of rare or hard to understand occupations and does not apply to locating sources or supply and attracting needed workers. Also, hard-to-understand work processes does not apply to operating units of conventional industries where precedents exist for establishing and filling positions unique to the industry. Organizations likely to employ "type B" directors of personnel include establishments engaged in scientific research and corporate headquarters or large conglomerates.

15. Why are typical organizational relationships delineated in the second paragraph of the job definition? Most of our job definitions do not include such elements.

15a. A personnel director's place in an establishment's organizational structure may indicate an exclusion. Personnel directors who sit too low in an establishment's organizational structure cannot be the source of advice and assistance of personnel management and problems to top management officials. A director of personnel who sits too high in the headquarters of a large and complex organization (e.g., large conglomerate) may have a free hand in establishing basic personnel policy for the organization, as opposed to directing a personnel program.

16. Should directors of personnel responsible for security and/or first aid be matched?

16a. They can be matched provided that the added responsibility does not play such an important role in the job as to be a pay level determinant. Situations exist in which the director of personnel supervises a security force of a dozen or more but the function is structured in a way that requires only minimal attention by the director of personnel. In other situations, security requires considerable attention and is a definite factor in the selection and compensation of a director of personnel. The security and first aid functions differ from EEO and OSHA functions in that they are not usually parts of a director or personnel's job. In contrast, EEO and OSHA reporting more often than not are integral parts of the job.

17. Can the director of personnel of a organizational unit be responsible for administering a job evaluation system if the principal responsibility for job evaluation is at a higher organizational level?

17a. Yes. Administration of a job evaluation system at a subordinate organizational unit typically includes responsibility for writing job descriptions for new and revised jobs, evaluating the jobs in accordance with the organization's system, and recommending grade levels, evaluation points, or rate ranges to higher levels in the organization. Of course, to match the BLS definition, responsibility for administering the job evaluation system must be a significant responsibility of the personnel director's job and must require more than an occasional effort.

18. Should directors of personnel in State and local governments be matched to the WCP definition? Are there peculiarities in the nature of these positions which warrant attention?

18a. Some directors of personnel in State and local governments do not fully meet the WCP definition for subtle reasons. Examples include positions having: Diminished responsibilities for employee relations, as benefits are administered by another department; or diminished responsibility for job evaluation, due to the reliance on outside consulting firms. Such positions should be excluded when the limited responsibility for major functional areas affects (e.g., weakens) the director's pay.

Directors of personnel in colleges and universities usually do not have recruitment and job evaluation responsibilities for teaching staff. Therefore, teaching staff should be excluded from "employment serviced".

Directors of personnel in public school (elementary and secondary) systems should be excluded, as their job evaluation responsibilities extend only to non-teaching staff (a small percentage of total employment).

19. Should part-time and temporary workers be included in the "number of employees in work force serviced"? Directors of personnel may have limited responsibility for recruiting, evaluating, or providing benefits for these workers.

19a. The Office of Personnel Management has determined that part-time and temporary employees should be counted, but only in proportion to the time they work. Directors of Personnel are responsible for incorporating part-time and temporary workers into the organization's personnel system. In some surveyed establishments, part-time and temporary workers receive personnel services similar to regular full-time employees.

Convert full-time, part-time and temporary employment serviced by the director of personnel into a full-time equivalent based on estimated hours worked over a one-year period. Document how the estimate was derived. If the full-time equivalent employment cannot be estimated within the limits necessary to accurately determine the level of a match, the director of personnel position should be excluded.

ATTORNEYS

1. In Attorney I, what length of time is implied in the phrase "...after initial orientation and training..."?

1a. The period of orientation and training can, of course, vary from position to position and could be anywhere from the usual period of a few weeks, up to, in rare cases, perhaps nine months, depending upon the individual situation.

2. What is the relative importance of the criterion, "experience required," in distinguishing between the various classification levels of attorneys?

2a. "Difficulty level of the legal work" and "responsibility level of job" are primary determinants of classification levels for attorneys. However, "experience required" is an important aid in the matching process because it indicates the qualifications that are needed at the various attorney levels. As a rule, an individual could not be expected to perform attorney work at a given level without having the amount and kind of experience shown under "experience required" in the classification chart. This criterion, therefore, serves both as an important check and as a guiding element.

3. How are attorney positions to be matched which include legal work of different levels of difficulty?

3a. Most attorney positions include legal work of several levels of difficulty. Usually there is one main block of work which best characterizes the job and is used as the basis for matching. Sometimes, there are two (or more) blocks of work of equal importance but at different difficulty levels. In some such cases the level of responsibility may differ for each block of work in such a way that both blocks match the same overall level when all elements are considered. If so, that is the appropriate matching level. In those few cases where there are two main blocks of work at the same level of responsibility but at different levels of difficulty, the job should be matched at the higher of the two possible levels.

4. What significance does the use of "outside" counsel on a retainer or contract basis have in determining the level of attorney positions.?

4a. This depends on the individual circumstances and is summarized as follows:

(1) If the "inside" and "outside" attorneys deal with different problems, cases, or functions, there is no effect on the level of the "inside" jobs.

(2) If the "inside" attorney is concerned only with whether to assign individual cases to "outside" attorneys there is no effect.

Neither is the "inside" attorney then credited with performing any work assigned to the "outside" counsel.

(3) If either "inside" attorney or the "outside" attorney provides legal advice and direction to the other, the effect is the same as it would be if both were "inside" attorneys and the same kind and degree of advice were furnished.

5. In the attorney series, what positions are usually considered to be above level VI?

5a. As stated in the definition, "Attorneys, frequently titled "general counsel" or "attorney general" (and their immediate full associates or deputies), who are responsible for participating in the management and formulation of policy for the overall organization in addition to directing its legal work," should be considered above level VI.

6. Do the exclusions in the answer to the above question automatically eliminate the top attorney for an organization from classification consideration?

6a. No. Judgment must be exercised in determining the nature of the top attorney's job. One of the most significant factors to consider in making a judgment is the kind of guidance received on organization policy. The classifiable attorney at higher levels is more concerned with directing the legal work of the organization than with participating in the formulation of overall policy.

7. Do attorneys in trust departments of banks usually match BLS attorney definitions?

7a. Attorneys in bank trust departments, often titled "trust officer," usually have as their primary function the financial management of trusts. They are more concerned with market and business conditions than with law. Therefore, duties of attorneys in bank trust departments should be screened carefully to be sure they meet the basic requirements of the definition (i.e., LL.B degree and bar membership) and function as attorneys with the BLS definition.

8. If an organization doesn't represent itself in court, can valid attorney matches be made?

8a. Yes. Attorneys do not have to appear in court to match the BLS definition.

9. Why are attorneys in legal firms excluded from WCP job matching?

9a. A research project conducted in 1974 found that many attorneys in large law firms performed work described in the WCP definitions, but that level distinctions were primarily based on "years since bar" rather than on duties and responsibilities. If end-of-survey reports indicate that attorneys in law firms can now be matched, additional research will be conducted by the WCP office.

BUYER

1. Is it not contradictory to describe at buyer III and IV the purchasing of technical items (sometimes very advanced ones) but at the same time to exclude buyer positions that require a professional education and qualifications in a physical science or in engineering?

1a. The buyer is an expert in the technical details of making purchases and often must have familiarity with the items bought and also with allied items. For example, the individual usually needs to know the technical terminology related to the items; the construction and performance characteristic considered critical by the user organization; the relative importance to the user of alternative features of the items; and, in a general way, the uses to which the items will be put. In time, the buyer frequently becomes highly knowledgeable in these matters. However, such areas of knowledge fall far short of being equivalent to a full professional background in engineering or a physical science. To illustrate, the buyer may know that a motor of specified horsepower, speed, shaft size, mount configuration, etc., is required but he usually does not need to have engineering knowledge as to why these characteristics rather than some others are necessary.

2. Many buyers specialize in purchasing one or a few related types of items. What distinguishes those that are excluded by item "d"?

2a. The buyers described in exclusion "d" must possess a specialized knowledge of the purchased items that goes well beyond the techniques of buying. Although these items may be graded, they are of highly variable quality, as would be typical of agricultural or forestry products. The buyer, therefore, makes "on-the-spot" judgments of the item's worth relative to the organization's requirements and often determines the quantities that it would be advantageous to purchasers of tobacco, wood for furniture, meat and produce for restaurants, real estate for plant locations, and other inherently variable items.

3. In the case of some buyer jobs an engineer or a plant committee reviews proposed purchases and makes the final decision to buy or not. What adjustment should be made in the level of the buyer job when this type of curtailment of responsibility is found?

3a. No adjustment is necessary or appropriate because this is not a curtailment of the buyer's responsibility. In fact, the situation is the normal one in many respects. The buyer typically is an expert in the technique of buying but is not expected or required to know or to decide what to buy. This latter responsibility normally and necessarily rests with the user of the items. However, the form in which the user exercises control varies. In the case of minor items, the user may merely specify the trade or brand name of the item needed. For repetitive purchases, the user's instructions are very often reduced to some form of "specification" and the buyer may then sometimes be delegated responsibility for buying as long as there is certainty that the "specification" is being met. For especially important purchases the using person or organization is usually directly involved in considering the alternative offerings and typically makes the final decision of purchase.

4. Would a buyer automatically be considered for level III or higher if the items bought are altered or customized to meet the purchasing establishment's needs?

4a. No. All factors of the description must be considered. Matching on one, or a few, key words of phrases should be avoided. Specially designed stationery or forms, for example, could be considered "customized" but certainly are not the type of technical or complex items intended at these levels.

5. Can contract negotiators be matched as buyers?

5a. In most instances yes. The term "contract negotiation" is often used a synonym for buying, often referring to any purchasing action that does not involve the usual bid-and-acceptance procedure. It thereby reflects the bargaining aspect of many purchase transactions. "Bargaining" is clearly a function of the buyer striving for the best deal. Whenever the term "contract negotiator" is used by the establishment as an alternative term for buyer, the jobs may be matched.

Occasionally, however, the term "contract negotiation" is used to denote a much more complex function. Typically, this is to be found when a very complex and costly product or service which is unique and must be specially designed is involved. Frequently, also, the one vendor is the only practical source and the one prospective purchaser is the only practical buyer, and it may be the first attempt of either to produce or purchase the particular item or service. Choosing among several vendors is not usually possible and neither is it feasible to probe for lower prices, faster deliveries, etc., in the usual manner. Negotiation in such circumstances is a process of vendor and purchaser jointly exploring every facet of the total transaction and production process in order to reach mutual agreement on each detail. Most often each party utilizes a team or committee composed of accountants, engineers, production experts, attorneys, contract negotiators, etc. Failure to agree almost always means abandonment by the purchaser of the total effort which involved the needed product or service. "Contact negotiation" in this situation is not "buying" in the usual sense an jobs that consist principally of such work are not to be matched as buyers.

6. What is meant by "contract administration" in exclusion paragraph "f"?

6a. This refers to the work that is done in connection with some purchases after the purchase contract is signed. Typically, this consists of monitoring the vendor's performance under the contract to assure that the product or service to be provided meets the purchasing organization's needs. Most often the term is used in connection with purchases of "designed and made-to-order" technical items to be produced and delivered over a period of time and where difficulty in adhering to specifications or delivery schedules is anticipated. Contract administrations who do little or no buying are excluded, but buyers who do limited contract administration incidental to their principal duty of buying may be matched. Note: In a few instances the title "contract administrator" is used for buyer positions rather than for the work discussed above. Such positions are to be matched if not excluded on other bases.

7. In a one-person situation, how is a "buyer" distinguishable from a purchasing agent (or other person) responsible for the management, direction, or supervision of a purchasing program?

7a. In general, the buyer is skilled in the techniques of making purchases and is concerned with the consummation of individual transactions. Those clerks under the buyer's supervision handle the clerical details associated with transactions assigned to the buyer. The person who is responsible for managing or directing the purchasing program may also personally execute individual transactions (in a one-person situation, this situation is unavoidable) while holding substantially broader responsibility. Therefore, the responsibilities of a program head, would include maintaining contacts with other managers as to their present and future purchasing needs; planning the purchasing program so as to take best advantage of staff resources, market conditions, etc., and most economically meet the organization's needs; supervising the clerical activities associated with the purchasing program such as maintaining contract files, preparing purchase orders, verifying receipt of purchases, approving payments to vendors, maintaining stock records, etc.; recommending or establishing the policies to be followed in making purchases; preparing reports; and otherwise demonstrating responsibility for the purchasing program itself and not just for individual transaction.

8. Some establishments use dollar amounts of purchases as a criterion for determining levels of buyers. Why are dollar limits not used in the BLS definitions?

8a. Dollar amounts purchased may be a valid basis for a level determination within an establishment, and possibly within an industry. However, the use of dollar amounts is not feasible here, because intercommodity, interestablishment and interindustry differences in dollar amounts purchased cannot be correlated with job levels to a satisfactory degree.

9. Should buyers in establishments that use the "invitation-to-bid" process be matched to the WCP definition? These buyers are typically found in such industries as basic steel and State and local governments. They may spend very little time buying in the

traditional sense, and much time preparing invitations to bid, evaluating bids, and making recommendations for awards.

9a. Buyers working under the invitation-to-bid process are covered by paragraph 2 of the WCP definition, i.e., "solicits bids, analyses quotations received, and selects or recommends supplier". The specific duties of such buyers are similar in nature to those of buyers in the Federal Government. Be careful, however, to exclude lower-level career ladder "buyers" who prepare and process invitations to bid but who do not analyze quotations and recommend suppliers.

10. Are there "buyers" below the BLS definition, other than those mentioned in exclusions (g), (h), and (i)?

10a. Yes. In order to be a match for the buyer series, a buyer must solicit bids, analyze quotes, and have the authority to make at least some purchases for the establishment. Positions making only recommendation for purchases generally do not match at any level. Similarly, positions authorizing the purchase of level I items and making recommendations for level II items generally match at level I.

COMPUTER PROGRAMMERS, SYSTEMS ANALYSTS, AND SYSTEMS ANALYST SUPERVISORS/MANAGERS

1. What is the reason for the numerous exclusions to the programmer and systems analyst definitions?

1a. The Office of Personnel Management's (OPM) classification standards for Computer Specialist, which includes computer programmers and systems analysts, also includes 2 other typical computer specializations (software specialists and equipment analysts); there is a separate OPM classification standard for computer scientists who are required to have a bachelor's degree in a specific scientific field.

2. Exclusion (b) of the programmer definition excludes positions responsible for developing and modifying computer systems. Exclusion (c) of the systems analyst definition excludes programmers and programmer analysts who write programs and solve user problems not requiring systems modification. What is the difference between a system and a program; between the WCP concept of a systems analyst and programmer?

2a. A program is a collection of instructions that causes a computer to use and manipulate data to solve a problem. A system is a collection of interrelated programs, typically using a common data base or interconnected data bases, to produce output for functional users. As described in the WCP systems analyst definition, systems analysts work with users to develop and modify systems; they may also writer programs. It may take several months or years to modify a complex system; a complex program can generally be written in a much shorter period of time. WCP programmers may also work with users and have to understand the framework and limitations of the systems that govern their programs; however, programming problems that require systems modifications for their solution are generally assigned or referred to a systems analyst.

3. Can an establishment position having responsibility for designing, developing, or modifying computer systems ever match the WCP programmer definition?

3a. Yes, but only in those rare instances when programming is the higher skill and is used to determine the position's pay. For example, establishment positions which combine WCP Programmer IV skills with Systems Analyst I duties should be matched at Programmer IV if the programming skills are a pay determinant.

4. How much programming can be performed by a position matched to the WCP Systems Analyst definition?

4a. The amount of time that a position matched to the WCP Systems Analyst definition spends programming varies widely. The systems analyst match is based on the position's responsibility for designing, developing, or modifying systems. Some systems analysts perform no programming; others write the programs that support systems design or modification. In some subordinate establishments, no systems design or development is performed and positions titled "programmer analyst" write programs is support of established systems and also modify the systems as necessary. Although these "programmer analysts" spend most of their time programming, they are still matchable to the systems analyst definition.

5. Are establishment job titles such as "Programmer Analyst" or "Systems Analyst" reliable indicators of job content?

5a. No. These titles can be misleading. For example, some establishments have a multi-level programmer analyst job series to include WCP programmer and systems analyst positions. Also, be careful not to overlook common job titles such as Project Manager, Project Leader or Supervisor, and Information System Programmer as potential matches to the definition.

6. Is there a standard career ladder progression from programming to systems analysis within different establishments?

6a. No. Establishment job series for computer programming and systems analysis work are structured in a variety of arrangements. The following career ladders are common:

- Programmer/Programmer Analyst/Systems Analyst
- Programmer Analyst
- Systems Analyst
- Programmer Analyst/Systems Analyst
- Programmer/Systems Analyst

Establishments tend to assign programming duties to less experienced incumbents and systems analysis work to top staff. However, some establishments have different (dual) career ladders for programmers and systems analysts.

7. How well do the WCP job titles "Computer Programmer" and "Computer Systems Analyst" relate to job titles used in surveyed establishments?

7a. There are important similarities and differences between the WCP titles (Computer Programmer and Computer Systems Analyst) and those used by surveyed establishments for similar jobs. Establishment data processing positions with "applications programmer" or "systems analyst" in their job title (e.g., Applications Programming Specialist, Sr. Systems Analyst) are potential matches for corresponding WCP jobs. Other commonly matched establishment position titles (e.g., Programmer Analyst, Analyst/Programmer) do not directly correspond to specific survey titles; however, depending on the duties performed, they might match one of the WCP jobs. Occasionally, an establishment position may include many workers who match the WCP Computer

Programmer definition and also many who match the Computer Systems Analyst definition; if the workers cannot be separated into matchable categories, the position should be excluded.

8. Why was the programmer definition revised for the 1985 survey? What changes were made from the computer programmer/programmer analyst job surveyed in 1984?

8a. No substantive changes were made to the definition in 1985. The WCP job title was changed from computer programmer/programmer analyst to computer programmer to discourage matching by establishment job title. (Some establishment positions titled programmer analyst are matchable to computer programmer definitions while others match our systems analyst definition.) Two other minor changes were made to the definition: The word "analysis" was modified to "programming analysis" to avoid confusion with "system analysis"; the word overall was deleted from the following sentence in the third paragraph. "However, the overall systems requirements are defined by systems analysts or scientists."

9. Exclusion (a) of the systems analyst definition excludes trainees who receive detailed directives and work plans, select authorized procedures for use in specific situations, and seek assistance for deviations and problems. Can you provide guidance concerning the education and experience requirements necessary for a match at level I?

9a. The skills required for Systems Analyst I are equivalent to those required for Programmer III. Therefore, matches for Systems Analyst I can be readily promoted from positions matched to the Programmer II definition. However, some establishments either do not employ positions matchable to the programmer definition or have dual career ladders for programmer and systems analyst matches. These establishments may, therefore, employ entry level positions (requiring a bachelor's degree and little or no experience) which fit the introductory paragraph of the systems analyst definition. Such entry level positions are usually covered by exclusion (a).

10. Why are entry level (trainee) systems analysts excluded when we match entry level positions in our other administrative job series?

10a. The work performed by trainee systems analysts is not readily defined by OPM job standards. Systems analysts in the Federal Government are generally promoted from the programmer ranks or from other computer specialties.

11. In establishment where positions matched as WCP systems analysts are usually promoted from the programmer ranks, there is often a "transition job" in which programmers begin to develop and modify systems. To which WCP job series should such positions be matched?

11a. "Transition jobs" having identifiable responsibilities for developing and modifying systems should be matched to the WCP systems analyst definition. Programmer positions which contain provisions for some incumbents to learn systems analysis on an informal basis should be matched to the programmer definition. When a clear judgment can not be made (in conjunction with your survey manager), match the position in either WCP job series and document it as a borderline match (see General questions and answers 3 and 4).

12. To what WCP level(s) should lead programmers and systems analysts be matched? What are the key distinctions between lead programmers or systems analysts and supervisors/managers?

12a. Lead duties are not a matching determinant. Lead positions should be matched solely on the basis of duties.

Leaders and supervisors often perform similar duties in assigning, directing, and reviewing the work of employees; for example, leaders may supervise the work of employees on projects. The distinguishing feature of supervisors is their formal responsibility for such activities as evaluating employee performance, interviewing candidates for their units, recommending hires and promotions, and reprimanding employees. Note that in some establishments positions titled Project Manager have formal supervisory responsibilities; in other establishments, project managers are work leaders.

The distribution of workers within a large systems and/or programming organization sometimes help us distinguish work leaders from supervisors. Lead positions tend to fit a pyramid distribution pattern (e.g., significantly fewer leads than nonsupervisors at the preceding establishment level). Supervisors however, may break "pyramid" distribution patterns (e.g., as many supervisors as nonsupervisory specialists).

13. Must systems analysts in private industry perform work for the employer's business? Can employees of firms who develop or modify computer applications systems for other organizations be matched?

13a. The WCP computer systems analyst definition includes employees of firms who develop or modify applications systems for other organizations.

14. Why are positions requiring a bachelor's degree in a specific scientific field (other than computer science) excluded from the computer programmer and systems analyst definitions, but not positions requiring a degree from one of several scientific disciplines? Should their supervisors be excluded?

14a. Computer applications programming and systems analysis work requires knowledge of the subject matter area being automated. Therefore, qualifications requirements for these jobs sometimes include a degree in one of several specialties in a general field. For positions requiring a background in business for example, a degree in accounting, business administration, or economics may be required; in the scientific field, a degree in engineering, physics, or chemistry may be needed. Such general background requirements are not incompatible with the WCP definition.

Some scientific programming and systems development problems are so dependent upon knowledge of one particular science that a general science background is not sufficient for their solution (e.g., engineering computer programs or systems which regularly require specialized in-depth engineering skills). Positions requiring such technical expertise in a specific scientific field should be excluded.

Supervisors of scientific programming and systems analysis positions requiring a bachelor's degree in a specific scientific field (other than computer science) should be excluded from the programmer and systems analyst supervisor/manager definitions.

15. ☞ Should "software development programmers" be matched or excluded? These programmers develop complex softwarepackages (e.g., Lotus 1-2-3, CAD programs). The programs are often written in "lower-level" languages, such as "assembly" or "C". The positions typically require coursework in discrete mathematical structures, data structures, machine and assembly language, programming principles, programming language design," Unix", "C", and computer graphics systems. In summary, these software development programmers are a cross between "applications" programmers and""systems" programmers. Their grades/evaluation points are similar to engineers in the same establishment.

15a. The particular "software development programmers" described above should be excluded, but only with the approval of your survey manager The exclusion is based on duties, and not on job title or pay (similar to scientific programmers). We do not currently have enough information to warrant a blanket exclusion for "software development programmers". Please document your matches/exclusions for this hybrid establishment job carefully.

16. ☞ Should computer programmers who write conventionalapplications programs for personnel computers (PC's) be matched or excluded?

16a. Computer programmers writing conventional applications for PC's should be excluded. The level-to-level distinctions for this specialized programming job does not correlate to those in the WCP computer programmer definition.

17. Should workers responsible for programming or developing systems for analog computers be matched?

17a. Establishment positions reserved only for workers who program or develop systems for analog computers should be excluded.

Positions including both digital and analog computer programmers and systems analysts should be matched, as long as these positions do not require a bachelor's degree in a specific scientific field (see exclusion (b) of the computer programmer and systems analyst definitions).

Analog computers typically measure continuously variable physical quantities. (Slide rules and thermometers are simplified analog computers.) While analog computers are usually programmed by engineering or scientific staff, programmers and systems analysts with analog computer responsibility have been found in the same establishment positions (in a few aircraft manufacturing firms) as digital computer programmers and systems analysts. As such hybrid positions are covered by the same OPM Federal classification standards as the WCP computer programmer, systems analyst, and systems analyst supervisor/ manager definitions, they can be matched to these WCP definitions.

18. What is the difference between system software and other computer software?

18a. Computer software consists of the detailed instructions (programs) which "tell" the hardware (computer equipment) what steps to perform in processing data. The two major software types are applications programs and systems software. Applications programs are designed to solve subject-matter (e.g., accounting) problems by the computer. However, applications programs are written in a language that is too complex for immediate acceptance by binary computers which receive their instructions in terms of 2 electronic-based choices (i.e., 0 or 1). Therefore, systems software (e.g., assemblers and compilers) is used to translate applications programs into computer instructions.

Systems software also includes control instructions which cover operating procedures common to all applications programs. For example, operating systems (often designed by computer manufacturers) control the execution of applications programs by providing functions such as scheduling, debugging, input-output control, storage assignment, and data management.

19. Exclusion (e) of the systems analyst and programmer definitions allow the matching of positions responsible for developing total packages (i.e., developing applications systems and programs and also selecting the required computer equipment ans systems software). Where are such positions typically found?

19a. Positions responsible for developing total packages are usually found in computer service (software) firms that develop computer systems and programs for their clients. Please note that positions responsible for developing both the applications systems and the system software in a total package are excluded.

20. Exclusion (g) of the programmer definition excludes positions not requiring three years of substantive clerical experience. In this context, what does "substantive" mean?

20a. Substantive clerical experience refers to clerical positions which require the incumbents to ensure the adequacy of the content of assigned transactions or documents (e.g., see WCP Personnel Clerk/Assistant III, General Clerks IV, Purchasing Assistant I). For clerical positions in the Federal Government, "substantive" work is recognizable at the GS-4 level and above.

21. How common are matches for systems analysts IV and V? Where can such matches be found?

21a. Systems analysts IV are found in relatively small numbers in some establishments having very complex systems requirements; systems analysts V are rarely matched. The low incidence of systems analysts IV and V can be attributed to their duties being integrated into supervisory systems analysis positions.

22. The systems analyst supervisor/manager definition specifies that the supervisor/manager must supervise at least two systems analysts. Should supervisor or managers who clearly have systems design responsibility but supervise fewer than two systems analysts be excluded?

22a. Supervisors or managers who supervise only systems analysts and programmers should be matched as systems analyst supervisors/managers if the work requires substantial and recurring use of systems analysis skills in directing staff. If the subordinate staff is comprised of fewer than two systems analysts, substantial documentation is needed to support the match.

23. Exclusion (a) of the systems analyst supervisor/manager definition excludes positions having significant responsibility for the supervisor of functional areas (e.g., system software development, data entry, or computer operations) not related to the systems analyst and programmer definitions. Can you describe more specifically which supervisory positions should be excluded? How should significant responsibility be interpreted for positions responsible for supervising both applications programming/systems analysis and software systems development?

23a. Aside from the obvious exclusions (e.g., computer operations manager), exclusion (a) applies to generalist positions (e.g., data processing managers) which have responsibility for applications systems and programming as well as one or more other functional areas such as systems software development, data entry, and computer operations. Positions responsible for supervising systems software development should be excluded if the work requires the uses of systems software skills in directing staff, even if the number of subordinate systems software programmers constitute a small percentage of total staff supervised.

24. ☞ Is base level determination for systems analyst supervisor/manager merely a mechanical exercise? What judgments are required? Should the technical expertise of the supervisor/manager be ignored? Should matches be changed if temporary employment shifts invalidate previous matches?

24a. Base level determination is not an exact science. Sometimes deviations are necessary for the following reasons:

- The technical expertise of the first-line supervisor/manager, as defined by the systems analyst definition, is significantly greater than a match based on the computed base level (e.g., supervisor uses Systems Analyst III skills but the computed base level is Programmer III; supervisor uses Systems Analyst IV skills but the computed base level is Systems Analyst II).

- Employee turnover, "grade creep", or temporary employment shifts distort the normal employee distributions by level. In these instances, the match should be based on the expected rather than the observed distribution.

☞ - Project managers" (in conventional EDP organizations who lack full supervisory responsibility are matched at computer systems analysts IV, primarily because they "supervise" at least one computer systems analyst III. As there are likely to be as many establishment project managers as matches for WCP computer systems analyst III, the base level of the project managers' supervisors is artificially high (computer systems analyst III or IV). In these instances, the project managers should be arbitrarily matched at computer systems analysts/supervisors I, and they should not be included in the base level computation of their supervisors. Consult your survey manager for help in resolving this subtle job matching problem.

25. ☞ Why are potential matches to the WCP computer systemsanalyst supervisor/manager definition excluded solely because the base level of nonsupervisory staff is below computer systems analyst II?.

25a. Question and answer # 22 provides for the matching of WCP computer systems analyst/managers with high technical skills (computer systems analyst III or higher), but with base levels below computer systems analyst II. Managerial positions requiring computer systems analyst II skills and having base levels of computer programmer III do not meet the requirements for a WCP computer systems analyst supervisor/manager match.

26. What is the normal base level of nonsupervisory work supervised?

26a. The most common base level is systems analyst II/programmer IV. In small establishments the base level is sometimes lower, indicating no match. In establishment that have complex computer systems, the base level may be above systems analyst II/programmer IV.

27. For establishments having more than one level of systems analyst supervisor/manager, can we assume that one base level of nonsupervisory work will apply to supervisory positions?

27a. No. Base levels of nonsupervisory work can vary with each establishment supervisory level. Large applications systems and programming departments sometimes have higher level nonsupervisory systems analysts who report to positions above the first-line supervisor. Therefore, reporting relationships between supervisory and nonsupervisory systems analysis positions should be defined prior to base level determination. Only nonsupervisory staff reporting directly or indirectly to a supervisory position can be used to calculate the base level of nonsupervisory work for that (supervisory) position.

28. At LS-1, 2, and 3 of the systems analyst supervisor/manager definition the size of the staff supervised is specified. How should matching proceed if the staff size is substantially larger than expected?

28a. Deviations from the expected staff size will be encountered and in some cases the deviations can be large. Such jobs should be closely scrutinized, but it they otherwise fit the definition they should be matched.

29. If a match for systems analyst supervisor/manager has been made at LS-2 and the "Note" at the end of the LS-2 paragraph (no subordinate supervisors) has been used, can the next supervisory level be matched at LS-3?

29a. In this instance, even though there will be only one subordinate supervisory level, the next higher level can be matched at LS-3 provided that the job otherwise has LS-3 characteristics.

CHEMISTS AND ENGINEERS

1. Should a "spectrographer" be considered as a possible match for the chemist series?

1a. Yes. Spectrography is a process of analytical chemistry which determines composition and properties by specialized photography?

2. Should metallurgists be classified as engineers? As chemists?

2a. Metallurgists should be excluded from both the engineer and chemist series. (Metallurgical engineers who are performing duties as defined in the engineering series may be classified in engineers.)

3. In which series (chemist or engineer) should a chemical engineer be classified?

3a. A judgment must be made of the type of work performed , to decide if the individual's job fits into either series. In general, however, chemical engineers tend to fit into the engineering series.

4. Note that the definitions of levels II, III, and IV of the chemist and engineer series contain references to incumbents with graduate level study. These references, which appear under "General characteristics," are intended to be neither all inclusive nor automatic guides for level matching. References to matching of chemists and engineers with graduate education were phrased in general terms for levels II and III. At level IV, the definitions state that "for positions primarily of a research nature, completion of all requirements for a doctoral degree may substituted for experiences." However, when it is determined that an incumbent is performing at a given level, a match should be made at that level. The level of duties and responsibilities is the basis for matching rather than "quality graduate" status or possession of an advanced degree.

5. The engineer job definition excludes qualify control engineers. Should qualify control chemists also be excluded?

5a. Qualify control chemists can be matched, provided they meet the professional requirements of the definition and their duties require the application of these requirements. The chemist is expected to apply a knowledge of principles, procedures, and practices in carrying out assignments, rather than a knowledge of rules, precedents, and an all-inclusive set of instructions. There is little question of matching chemists doing quality control work at the higher levels, because their work performance and responsibility can be adequately matched to level definitions. Note that terminal positions are specifically excluded in level I definition for both chemists and engineers but not at level II.

6. Industrial engineers are specifically excluded from the BLS engineer series. What are the characteristics of this job so that it can be recognized?

6a. Industrial engineers are primarily involved with improving the utilization of production facilities and personnel. Typical duties include the following: Plans equipment layout, work flow, and accident prevention measures to maintain efficient and safe utilization of plant facilities. Plans and oversees work study and training programs to promote efficient manpower utilization. Develops and oversees quality control, cost control, inventory control, and production record systems.

7. Is the Engineer I at the beginning level of professional engineering work?

7a. Yes. An Engineer I usually has a bachelor's degree in engineering and may receive formal classroom or seminar-type training. Although performing relatively routine tasks under close supervision, the work is characterized by its purpose of providing experience and familiarization with the methods and practices of the employer. Progression to a higher level in a relatively short time is expected.

8. Is it realistic to expect to find qualified engineers or chemists performing work of the type described at level II for extended periods of time?

8a. In some establishments workers may not routinely advance beyond level II. Matched workers must meet the qualification requirement of our job definition.

9. What are some of the limitations placed on the independence of action found in the Engineer III definition?

9a. Independent evaluation, selection, and application are limited to "standard engineering techniques...." Although judgment and ingenuity are expected, these elements are limited to "making minor adaptations and modifications." Limiting the nature of the types of assignments is the phrase: "Other activities of limited scope requiring knowledge of principles and techniques commonly employed in specific narrow areas of assignments." Other limiting phrases in the III level definition are "conventional types", "relatively few complex features", and "for which there are precedents".

10. Sometimes the IV level is referred to as the "journeyman" level for engineers. What is the connotation of "journeyman" when used in this manner?

10a. By definition a journeyman is one who has learned the trade. In the IV level definition, there are such statements as: "Fully competent engineer in all conventional aspects of the subject matter or the functional area of the assignments......"

"independently performs most assignments....." Further, at this level "work requires a broad knowledge of precedents in the specialty area and a good knowledge of principles and practices of related specialties." In short, the level IV engineer has sufficient education and experience of an appropriate nature in order to perform as a fully qualified professional.

Establishment "journeymen" engineers should not be automatically matched to BLS level IV. Depending on the complexity of the engineering program, an establishment's journey level could match at BLS level III, IV, or V.

11. There is reference to independence of action (stated or implied) by engineers classified in levels III through VIII. In general, how does this independence differ between levels?

11a. In ascending levels the engineers have finality of decision in more complex and important matters. For example: At level III, "independently evaluates, selects and applies standard engineering techniques, procedures and criteria, using judgment in making minor adaptations and modifications"; at level V, "makes decisions independently in engineering problems and methods"; and at level VIII, "makes decisions and recommendations that are recognized as authoritative and have a far-reaching impact on extensive engineering and related activities of the company or government agency". The degree of independence relates to, and must be considered together with, other aspects of the defined level.

12. There is "responsibility for the direction of others" specified or permissible at each level of the engineering series from III through VIII. What are some of the considerations which help differentiate between levels of responsibility with reference to supervision given?

12a. The nature of duties supervised and the level of personnel supervised are important considerations. At level III, an individual "may supervise or coordinate the work of drafters, technicians, and others who assist in specific assignments." A person at level VIII "supervises several subordinate supervisors or team leaders, some of whose positions are comparable to Engineer VII, or individual researchers, some of whose positions are comparable to Engineer VII and sometimes Engineer VIII."

13. Why was the "NOTE" following level VIII of the chemist and engineer definitions expanded to differentiate between certain managerial and supervisory responsibilities?

13a. The "NOTE" was restructured to clarify the intent of the definitions. During the OPM/BLS field review of the chemist and engineer definitions, the possibility of misinterpretation under certain conditions was recognized. As has always been the case, individuals whose decisions have direct and substantial effect on an organization's policy making are to be excluded.

14. What responsibilities are sufficient to exclude positions under item (2) of the "NOTE" following level VIII of the chemist and engineer definitions?

14a. Chemists and engineers responsible for all three of the following functions should be excluded from matching the definitions:

- Final determinations on initiating, dropping, or curtailing programs or major projects; the timing for these changes; and the amount of resources to devote to particular projects;

- Long-range planning and periodic evaluation of program goals;

- Final determinations on organizational changes which have considerable impact, such as those involving basic structure, operating costs, or key positions.

Supervisory responsibility for work planning and organization, which is specifically included in the definition, covers authority to develop plans and schedules for programs that will meet goals, objectives, and broad priorities established at higher levels.

15. The Engineer VIII definition states that the incumbent is responsible for "deciding the kind and extent of engineering and related programs needed to accomplish the objectives of the company or government agency" and for "planning and organizing facilities and programs". How do these responsibilities differ from the managerial functions discussed in question 14 which would exclude a job from matching the definition?

15a. While these responsibilities do appear similar to the type of material responsibilities excluded from the definition, within the context of the paragraph which begins with "In a supervisory capacity...," these functions are actually quite different. Work planning and organization is a responsibility of all supervisors. At the level described in the Engineer VIII definition, this responsibility includes authority to develop plans and schedules for programs that will meet goals and objectives and broad priorities established at higher levels.

The definition includes positions in situations in which objectives and related policies are set at higher organizational levels. As a technically oriented supervisor, an Engineer VIII is responsible for making technical determinations as to the kinds and extent of programs needed to accomplish objectives, and supervisory decisions involving planning the utilization of available facilities and staff. It is higher level management's responsibility, however, to make the final decisions on which specific programs to initiate, the amount of resources to devote to particular projects, and other related managerial decisions, as discussed in question 14.

16. In the descriptions of chemists and engineers who function as supervisors, reference is made to the level of staff supervised (e.g., at level VIII, "directs several subordinate supervisors, some of

whom are in positions comparable to Chemist VII"). Must the staff supervised meet these requirements for the supervisory job to matched?

16a. This staff-level requirement in the chemist and engineer definitions must be strictly adhered to so that the job matches can appropriately reflect the Federal classification standards on which the definitions are based. Background studies of establishment job structures have shown that supervisory chemists and engineers whose highest level subordinates are two or more levels (in BLS terms) below them could not be accurately matched to the definitions. It is therefore essential that matches of supervisory chemists and engineers follow the specifications in the paragraphs titled "responsibility for the direction of others."

Note also that these comments apply only to jobs of primarily a supervisory nature. Individual researchers may have assistants several levels below them with no other higher level subordinates. Nothing in this Q and A should be interpreted as excluding such high level researchers.

17. Occasionally chemists and engineers conducting basic research in new or emerging fields of science and receiving little or no supervisory guidance or direction are encountered. In such cases there is often little or no information about duties and responsibilities available on which to base job matches. How should job matching proceed under these circumstances?

17a. If adequate information on duties and responsibilities cannot be obtained, the job cannot and should not be matched.

18. What are the identifying characteristics of position that should not be matched?

18a. As the preceding Q and A suggests, the absence of information on duties and responsibilities is a key identifying factor. The respondent may state that the workers in question are members of a special group working apart form other chemists and engineers and that only a few officials, if any, (typically not including the respondent) have any detailed knowledge of the activities and duties of the group. Job descriptions are typically much less informative than those for other professional and technical positions or may not exist. Usually they describe only the functions to be carried out rather than the duties of the individual researchers.

Qualification requirements for positions of this type reflect the unusual combination of talent and experience essential for the performance of basic research. The number of individuals who can meet them may be very small, to the extent that recruiting may focus on a few nationally recognized researchers. This reflects the extraordinary technical demands of such jobs and the creativity and foresight needed to assess the results of basic research.

A few jobs with the above characteristics were identified and closely studied. In some cases we concluded that the level of work performed is above our level VIII. In the others, BLS levels could not be assigned.

19. Should environmental chemists and engineers be matched? Their duties range from redesigning a structure or process for conformance to established standards to completing impact studies for future projects. Many government units also employ such workers.

19a. Yes, providing that their duties and responsibilities can be matched to the level-to-level distinctions in the BLS definition.

20. Should Bachelor of Engineering Technology graduates in engineering positions be matched at the Engineer I level?

20a. Inexperienced Bachelor of Engineering Technology graduates performing (or learning to perform) professional engineering work can be matched at the Engineer I level.

21. Should we exclude any specific type of chemist such as biochemists?

21a. Jobs such as biochemist which extend significantly beyond the introductory paragraph of the WCP chemist definition should be excluded. Note that in addition to the BLS duties, biochemists also test the effect of chemicals on plants and/or animals.

22. Are software engineers who work on computer programs and hardware potential matches for the engineer series? If so, when do we match them and when do we exclude them?

22a. Yes, software engineers are potential matches for the engineer series. Match positions that require four-year engineering degrees and can be equated to the level-to-level distinctions in the WCP definition. Exclude positions that require a computer science degree.

23. I have seen schedules which included maintenance engineers. Shouldn't maintenance engineers be excluded? Also, can't professional engineers who are either construction or manufacturing plant superintendents match, especially if they have degreed engineers reporting to them?

23a. The exclusion in the WCP definition refers to "engineers whose primary responsibility is to be charge of nonprofessional maintenance work." Maintenance engineers who do not fit this exclusion can be matched. Jobs such as construction and plant superintendents often have responsibilities which extend beyond engineering into such areas as production and plant operations. The WCP level-to-level definitions do not apply to positions which have responsibilities broader than engineering.

24. Should "Administrative Engineers" be matched? Some higher level engineering positions are primarily administrative in nature, although they may require four-year engineering degrees. What is the WCP criteria for matching or excluding such positions?

24a. For a WCP match, supervisory engineering positions must: 1) require sufficient technical skills to direct the work of the engineering staff; and 2) be matchable to the level-to-level distinctions in the WCP definitions. Position not meeting both of the above criteria should be excluded (e.g., state highway department administrators who supervise several engineers at WCP level VI but whose program generally lacks "critical problems the solution of which requires major technological advances and opens the way for extensive related developments".)

25. Should research engineers in universities be matched?

25a. Usually not. Their pay is normally very low and is not representative of a typical business environment. It reflects the casual atmosphere and lack of work rules present in a university setting and is usually out of line with other occupation series in the same institution. Also, their pay structure is not designed to be competitive with non-university establishments.

26. Why do the two separate matrixes for supervisory and nonsupervisory engineers emphasize different job matching techniques? Why is it sometimes necessary to match two identically graded company positions (one supervisory, one nonsupervisory) to different white-collar levels? Is there a correlation between the matrix technique and the base level concept? If so, why are the white-collar definitions for supervisory engineers not written using base level concepts, as were computer systems analyst supervisor/managers? Can you quantify the sentence " a substantial portion of the work supervised is comparable to that described for engineer IV" that is stated in the supervisory portion of the definition for engineer V?

26a. The engineer definitions were developed from two different Federal OPM standards and include both supervisory and nonsupervisory components. The nonsupervisory definitions were derived from the job standards for nonsupervisory engineers. The supervisory engineering definitions were derived from OPM's supervisory grade evaluation guide. These two different job evaluation concepts were consolidated into one definition because many firms in non-federal organizations do not have separate job classifications for supervisory and nonsupervisory engineers. For organizations that do have separate supervisory and nonsupervisory components in their engineering series, two different job matching techniques are necessary to insure proper matching. In these instances, one WCP job level may include two or more company grade levels, with supervisory matches graded higher nonsupervisory matches.

There is a correlation between the matrix and base level approaches to job matching but they are not identical. Unlike the personnel specialist supervisor/manager and computer systems analyst supervisor/manager definitions, supervisory engineers have to be technically proficient at the WCP level to which they are matched; that is, a supervisory engineer matched at level VI must have level VI technical skills. Also, the supervisory matrix approach only applies to organizations with separate supervisory and nonsupervisory engineering series, whereas the base level approach for personnel and systems analysts supervisors is applied universally. The term "substantial proportion" as stated in the engineer V definition can be interpreted as 25%, conforming to the base level concept used in both the personnel and systems analyst supervisor series.

REGISTERED NURSES

1. What is a charge nurse? Should charge nurses be matched to the WCP R.N. definition?

1a. A charge nurse is usually a registered nurse who performs lead or administrative functions. They are generally excluded from the R.N. definition for performing similar duties to the R.N.'s they guide but receiving extra pay for their lead or administrative responsibilities.

2. Why are nurse anesthetists matched at WCP R.N. level III? Their pay is frequently much higher than other level III matches.

2a. Duty and responsibility requirements for nurse anesthetists are similar to other level III matches. Their pay is often higher due to market conditions. They should continue to be matched at level III, but beginning in 1989 will be coded and reported separately.

3. Should R.N.'s in HMO's who diagnose, treat, and advise patients by phone be matched?

3a. Yes. Registered nurses who diagnose, treat, and advise patients by phone are providing professional nursing care even though no physical contact is involved.

4. Should R.N.'s working in surgeon's offices be matched? Their duties are normally limited to assisting physicians with treatment. They usually do not assess patient health problems nor do they develop and implement nursing care plans. Likewise, should R.N.'s in secondary schools who are limited to deciding whether a doctor should be called in cases of illness or injury be matched? They provide little or no skilled nursing care.

4a. Not all R.N.'s are matchable to the WCP definition. Situations such as those mentioned above are typical of position that do not match. Positions matched as WCP R.N.'s must meet the requirements of the first paragraph of the definitions.

5. Exclusion (d) in the job description excludes R.N.'s in nursing homes who perform the same duties as LPN's but who are hired primarily to meet State classification requirements. Is it likely that a large number of R.N.'s (i.e., 20 or more) in a nursing home would meet exclusion (d)?

5a. Exclude all R.N.'s nursing homes with the same duties and job description as LPN's. These R.N.'s are typically hired to meet State certification requirements and/or to complete paperwork that requires an R.N.'s signature. However, the number of R.N.'s performing the same work as LPN's in a nursing home should be small (i.e., 1-5). If large numbers of nursing home R.N.'s are excluded, substantial documentation is necessary.

6. Should nursing home R.N.'s be matched at WCP level I or II?

6a. There is no automatic level of matching nursing home R.N.'s. Some should be matched to level I and some to level II, depending on the complexity of the nursing care provided. Often the level of nursing care can judged by the type of facility being operated. R.N.'s working in skilled are facilities providing continuous health care are more likely to provide the type of complex nursing care matchable to WCP R.N. II than intermediate and residential care facilities, where the health care provided is less than continuous.

7. Many establishments have only one job level matching our RN definition. As the WCP definition has four levels, is it appropriate to split an establishment's one level job over two or more WCP levels?

7a. Not generally. The WCP RN definition doesn't contain training levels ,such as those found in the accountant, engineer, and programmer series. If, in rare instances, an establishment RN job spans two WCP levels, please explain both how and why the split was made.

8. The RN II Specialist definition states "In comparison with RN II, pay typically reflects advanced specialized training, experience, and certification." How are we to measure this pay factor?

8a. RN II specialists are typically found in establishments that also have matches for the RN II definition. Matches for the RN II specialist definition in these instances are expected to be at higher establishment grade levels than the RN II matches, partly because of the advanced specialized training, experience and certification required for the job.

9. RN specialists working outside of intensive care and critical care (e.g., obstetrics, pediatrics, operating room) otherwise match the RN II Specialist definition. They also sometimes receive higher pay for having advanced special training, experience, and certification. Why are they usually excluded from the RN II Specialist definition?

9a. Additional pay for advanced training, experience, and certification is not sufficient reason to raise the level of any WCP match. However, Federal OPM job standards do provide a slightly higher pay grade (GS 10 vs. GS 9) for nursing specialists in difficult nursing areas. Separate, higher paying jobs for specialists in such conventional nursing areas as obstetrics, pediatrics, and operating rooms usually result from a hospital's efforts to retain nurses.

10. Matching RN II specialists only when they are graded higher than the other RN II's in an establishment seems to violate WCP job matching concepts. When an establishment has only one RN level (matched to WCP level II),why shouldn't we try to identify and match (to RN Specialist II) the intensive care and critical care nurses who have advanced specialized training, experience, and certification?

10a. The WCP survey is not designed as an audit of establishment's records. The RN II specialist definition was developed as a result of the 1987 WCP survey which identified a significant proportion of large hospitals as having nurses that were graded higher than the level II matches but lacked some of the elements required for matching at level III. Field representatives had difficulty in determining the appropriate level of the match. RN II Specialist was written to facilitate RN job matching . We don't want to complicate the job by making it more difficult to survey.

11. Some registered nurses work three 12-hour days per week. Overtime is sometimes paid for any time worked over 8 hours per day. Accordingly, some establishments reduce the nurses' straight-time hourly rate in order to limit weekly pay. How should we report pay and hours worked for these workers?

11a. For nurses working three 12-hour shift, report total weekly earnings (including overtime pay) for the normal 36-hour workweek. Report the standard weekly hours as 36. This question and answer supercedes OWS Manual of Procedures instructions for reporting only straight-time pay.

LICENSED PRACTICAL NURSES

1. Can you explain the similarity in pay between LPN's II & III in nursing homes? Most nursing homes have only one level of LPN. Those authorized to adapt patient care match at level III, and the rest usually match at level II. It confuses us that the qualifications and pay for nursing home LPN's in the same geographic area are generally the same for both the level II and level III matches.

1a. To allow publication of LPN III salaries, do not match LPN III's in nursing homes unless either: 1.) A match exists for LPN II in the same establishment or 2.) the establishment pays for prior experience at LPN level II. The WCP sample in nursing homes is not sufficient to permit unusually subtle differentiation in matching. Although more research is needed, differences in delegated authority given to LPN's among nursing homes apparently stem from organizational design. The qualification requirements and pay of LPN's in nursing homes within designated labor markets is typically similar.

NURSING ASSISTANTS

1. What are typical duties of WCP nursing assistants II, III, IV, and nursing assistants above level IV (that should be excluded) in mental health institutions and residential care facilities?

1a. WCP nursing assistants II in mental health institutions and residential care facilities are usually responsible for observing and reporting on patient health conditions. Level III nursing assistants will also be expected to exercise independent initiative or limited judgment in performing their work. Typical duties include teaching patients self care and encouraging them to participate in activities. Level IV nursing assistants also assist professional staff in planning and evaluating patient or resident care. Nursing assistants above level IV participate (rather than assist) in planning and modifying patient or resident care; function as co-therapists in therapy sessions; or coordinate treatment activities with patients, families, and facility staff.

2. Should jobs with titles such as "psychiatric technician" and "mental health worker" in psychiatric hospitals be matched to the WCP nursing assistant definition? Often, these jobs require associate or bachelor degrees in psychology.

2a. Generally, yes. Positions such as "psychiatric technician" and "mental health worker" are generally matchable to the WCP nursing assistant definition. It is not unusual to find positions requiring associate and bachelor degrees matched to levels III and IV. Exclude positions above nursing assistant IV, as described in the answer (1a) of question 1 above.

3. Some establishments only have one level of nursing assistant which spans WCP nursing assistant levels I and II. Such nursing assistants primarily provide personal care to patients, but they also take vital signs and observe and report on patient conditions. At what WCP level (I or II) should these nursing assistants be matched? Does the percentage of time spent performing personal care to patients affect the level of the match?

3a. Establishment jobs which span nursing assistants levels I and II should be matched to level II. Level I is reserved for positions which are limited to providing only personal care to patients.

The percentage of time spent performing personal care is normally irrelevant in determining the level of a nursing assistant. Both WCP nursing assistants levels I and II are entry level positions. The knowledge required to take vital signs, and observe and report on patient conditions is sufficient to raise the match to level II.

4. Health clinics and HMO's often have positions such as "medical assistants" which, in addition to standard nursing assistant duties, also perform a variety of office clerical functions. Are these matchable to the WCP nursing assistant definition?

4a. Nursing assistants are expected to do some minor clerical work in connection with their nursing duties, such as securing admission data from patients and charting patient care. However, positions also responsible for clerical work unrelated to the nursing function (e.g., posting accounts, billing, and insurance processing) are too broad to match the WCP nursing assistant definitions.

MEDICAL MACHINE OPERATING TECHNICIANS

1. How do the four levels of the Medical Machine Operating Technician equate to the EEG technician, EKG technician, and diagnostic sonographer jobs surveyed for the Hospital IWS?

1a. Based on the IWS job description for these three occupations, the following guidelines seem reasonable:

IWS	WCP Medical Machine Operating Technician
EKG Technician, Class B	Level I
EKG Technician, Class A	Level II
EEG Technician	Level II
Diagnostic Medical Sonographer	Level III

These correlations are based only on comparisons between BLS definitions. Therefore, do not slot matches for medical machine operating technicians based on these guidelines. Please explore your matches carefully, provide establishment job descriptions where available, and make appropriate comments in your end-of-survey reports.

2. Notations and abbreviations for certain types of equipment are indicated in the description for Medical Machine Operating Technician. Is this list all-inclusive?

2a. No. We provided as many abbreviations and notations as we could find from our sources. Please search for more examples and document them in your job match worksheets and end-of-survey reports.

CIVIL ENGINEERING TECHNICIANS

1. In some establishments, construction inspectors are sometimes responsible for coordinating the resolution of problems in the design of a project. How should these construction inspectors be matched to the WCP definition?

1a. The BLS definition for construction inspector allows for interpreting and resolving differences between plans and specifications to resolve construction problems at levels IV and V. However, positions receiving additional pay for more complicated design responsibilities should be excluded.

ENGINEERING TECHNICIANS

1. What is the difference between level I and level II engineering technicians?

1a. The level I position is an entry level position for employees with very limited technical background (education or experience or combination). Technical tasks and assignments, which are performed under close supervision, provide training and familiarization to the employee. The level II position is less than of a training position and more of a working position capable of performing routine tasks alone without close supervision.

2. Frequently, minimum ET entrance qualifications vary between establishments. Should a beginning technician in one establishment who has, for example, two years of technical schooling, be matched higher than a beginning technician in another establishment who has only a high school diploma including some science courses?

2a. Qualifications are not a grade level determinant. Matches should be based on the work being performed. However, employees with greater technical background are often capable of performing more responsible assignments after an initial period of familiarization, than employees with limited technical background. In situations where minimum entrance requirements are high for beginning technicians, and it is difficult to determine if the job matches ET level I or II, inquire whether the technicians are performing ET level I or II work after a brief period of familiarization. If the answer is that level II work is being performed, consideration should be given to matching at level II.

3. Can a match be made of skilled craftsman, such as an electrician or machinist, who has been reclassified or reassigned by the establishment to a position of engineering technician?

3a. A worker qualified as a skilled craftsman should not be arbitrarily excluded from matching. Determine whether or not the location of the craft skill is the primary function as a "technician." Determine also if all three of the required criteria in he engineering technician definitions are met.

4. Is a grade level mismatch indicated if an ET provides technical support to engineers at a lower grade or pay level?

4a. No. ET's provide technical support services to various engineers based on the assignment rather than their relative standing with an engineer. The grade level is determined by matching the technician's duties the appropriate ET job description.

5. How should entry level degreed engineers performing ET duties be matched?

5a. Engineers are excluded from coverage of the ET definitions. Entry level engineers often perform technician duties while receiving training or familiarization as shown in the level I and II engineer job definitions. Such positions should be matched as engineers.

6. Does the statement "work pertains to electrical, electronic, or mechanical components or equipment" refer to the use of such equipment in performance of work or does it refer to the product of the engineering effort in which the technician's support is provided?

6a. The statement refers to the latter. A technician who uses electronic instruments to make chemical analyses, for example, would not be matched as an engineering technician.

7. Should ET work which is not exclusively in the electronic, electrical or mechanical engineering field, be covered?

7a. Frequently, engineering work in these fields also involves or combines subsystems or equipment in other fields such as optics, hydraulics, pneumatics, etc. Technicians in these other fields should be included if electronic, mechanical or electrical engineering work is an important part of that field.

8. At what level should a group leader of engineering technicians be matched?

8a. Group leader duties are not a grade level determinant. The position should be matched on the basis of the technical duties performed.

9. Does the fact that specific technicians perform other technical duties than those than shown in the ET definitions preclude matching?

9a. No. The duties shown in the ET descriptions are just typical examples of various technical duties to indicate the level of difficulty and responsibility at teach grade level.

10. Why are "quality control technicians" excluded from the engineering technician definition?

10a. In addition to production line inspectors, some electronics companies employ technicians (e.g. Product Test Technicians,) who test final products such as circuit boards to assure that they are acceptable for marketing. As the work is related to quality control rather than to product development or process improvement, the position should be excluded.

11. Why are "model makers" excluded when engineering technician work includes the construction of models? What is the distinction?

11a. "Model makers" are blue-collar workers who build complex research and prototype models used in scientific, engineering, developmental, experimental, and test work. The work requires skill and knowledge of more than one specific trade, but does not require any knowledge of science or engineering. Engineering tech technicians, on the other hand, are white-collar employees with some knowledge of science or engineering and have duties that may include building of models or breadboards. Care should, of course, be taken to avoid automatically excluding jobs which involve model making.

12. What is "project planning" as referred to in Level V?

12a. A "project" refers to a block of work which is of a sufficient breadth and/or complexity that it requires coordination of several parts, each with independent analysis and solution. "Planning" involves making the necessary technical decisions to meet certain project goals and time frames. For example, a level V assignment might consist of an experimental project to develop new electrical circuit equipment. The technician would perform tasks as follows: Explore available sources of information; study and analyze unsatisfactory characteristics of present items; determine and evaluate possible approaches with close collaboration of supervisor and others; plan the various phases of the approach; develop electrical circuits and components; arrange for fabrication of pilot models; determine test procedures and the design of any special test equipment which might be needed; evaluate test results in terms of attainment of objectives; and make design changes needed to overcome indicated deficiencies.

13. It seems that the duties of level V ET's are similar to those performed by level III and IV engineers. How should we distinguish between ET's and engineers?

13a. Engineers normally have a B.S. degree in engineering and are required to apply a professional knowledge of engineering theory and principles to their work. ET's, on the other hand, normally have no more than an associate's degree and are responsible for solving engineering problems by applying established work methods, design precedents, and practical judgment and ingenuity requiring only an elementary grasp of basic scientific principles.

In some establishments, nondegreed engineers are promoted from the ET ranks, and may be matched s WCP engineers if they are required and expected to apply broad professional knowledge and can advance career wise along with the degreed engineers. It is possible that some nondegreed positions previously matched as engineers may now match as ET V, providing that they meet all of the requirements of the ET definition.

DRAFTERS

1. What is the significance of the terms "reverse curves" and "hidden lines" as used in the Drafter III definition?

1a. These terms indicate that drafters at this level must be familiar with drafting techniques that require skill and training. These particular terms should be familiar to many respondents but a valid match can certainly exist at this level if these terms do not apply to the work performed provided that other techniques or similar complexity are employed.

2. Excluded from Drafter I are drafters "performing elementary tasks while receiving training in the most basic drafting methods." Can "elementary tasks" and "basic drafting methods" be further defined?

2a. Elementary tasks may involve housekeeping functions such as filing and simple care and maintenance of drafting tools. Basic drafting methods include proper use of pencil, pen, T-square, triangles, compass, templates, etc.

3. Should "computer assisted drafter" positions be matched?

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3a. Yes, providing that the complexity of the drawings prepared by workers in the positions is matchable to the level-to-level distinctions in the WCP definition. The level of pay for computer-assisted drafting vs. conventional drafting is not currently an issue in deciding whether to match or exclude computer-assisted drafters.

COMPUTER OPERATORS

1. It seems unrealistic to survey six levels of computer operators. Most establishments have less than four levels. Why do we survey six levels?

1a. The Office of Personnel Management's grade classification standard for computer operators in the Federal Government distinguish six levels of work. Most establishments we survey, however, have matches only at the first two or three levels. However, in some establishments having extensive computer operations, higher level matches can be found. Matches at level VI are rare. We survey all six levels to provide as much usable data as possible to the OPM.

2. Is it necessary that an operator perform each of the tasks listed in the introductory paragraph to be matched?

2a. No. The tasks listed merely characterize the computer operator job. An operator may not perform all of the tasks or may perform other related tasks of equivalent difficulty and still match. However, please note that responsibility for responding to computer output instructions or error conditions is a criteria for matching at levels II and above (see question and answer 7). Operators who are not required to review error messages and make corrections because the computer system are either too small (see exclusion "a") or too automated (see question and answer 5) are excluded.

3. What proportion of the workday must an operator spend actually operating the computer (at the central console) to be a proper match?

3a. There is no guidepost figure available. Computer operators often spend less than half of their time actually at the computer control console. If console operation is a specific duty of the job and other duties performed are similar to those listed in the introductory paragraph, the job should be match. Trainees may, for example, spend only a limited amount of time at the console, but should not be excluded for this reason.

A more difficult problem may be encountered with lead operators, who may operate the computer only during lunch periods and breaks or when sufficient staff otherwise not available. Such positions can be matched provided the remainder of the definition fits. It is necessary, for a valid match, that the principal duties include frequent console operation.

4. Are these computer operator jobs in industry that can not be matched to the BLS definition?

4a. Yes. As with any other occupation, some establishment jobs within the scope of the BLS definition might not be matchable because of peculiarities in the organizational structure. Aside from the exclusions described in the introduction to the definition, one special situation may be encountered occasionally in establishments having very large and highly automated computer operations. In these instances, the duties of the operators have little resemblance to the BLS job definition. Many of the decisions normally made by an operator are made by a computer. In such systems another computer rather than an operator may handle such functions as: responding to operating instructions and computer output instructions; and maintaining the operating record. (Establishments with such systems may have other computer system with matchable operators.) We are interested in learning more about any such situations encountered and would like to have them described in end-of-survey reports.

5. Should operators running scientific programs be matched as well as those running business programs?

5a. Yes, provided, or course, that they meet the requirements of our job definition (See exclusion C).

6. What is the meaning of the phrase "reviews error messages and makes corrections during operation", which appears in the introductory paragraph?

6a. This is possibly the most important of the computer operator's duties. The computer, in a sense, communicates with the operator via the medium of a typewriter-printer linked electrically to the central processing unit of the computer. In processing a program, the operator mounts tapes, switches equipment into the system, sets up machines by turning dials to proper settings, etc., by following a pre-established plan (operating instructions). As the program runs, the computer sends messages through the typewriter-printer, such as: The input tape is no longer needed; additional data are needed to complete run; part of the system is not functioning properly, etc. The operator's duties involve setting up and operating the computer in the manner described in the operating instructions and responding to the messages from the computer. The BLS job definitions' level distinctions are based, in part, on the degree of initiative and skill required of the operator in performing these functions.

7. In some establishments, the level of a computer operator match may depend more on the assigned shift rather than on grade classification. How should matches be made under these circumstances?

7a. The match should be on the basis of the duties actually performed by the individual operators. In some cases, this may mean matching operators in the same grade at different BLS levels according to what shift they are assigned. Some establishments do most of their routine work at night and most of their new, likely-to-cause-problems, work during the day.

8. Some establishments have two grade levels of computer operators which are distinguished by the operator's experience, speed, or knowledge of company operations. Since the BLS job definition does not distinguish levels based on the these factors, how are we to match the jobs?

8a. The jobs must be matched on the basis of the factors used in our job definition, even if it means placing the two establishment levels into one BLS level. (A close examination of such situations will often reveal that the jobs do, in fact, differ in aspects recognized in the BLS definition.)

9. What do we mean by a "lead operator?"

9a. A lead operator, in addition to functioning as a computer operator, performs such duties as: making work assignments on a day-to-day basis; solving technical problems referred by other operators; and training new operators. Other duties may include: arranging work schedules of employees in the unit; informally providing management with options regarding performance of employees and suitability of applicants; and consulting with systems programmers, etc. Positions having formal supervisory responsibilities (e.g., shift supervisor, computer operations supervisor) are excluded.

10. At what level should lead operators be matched?

10a. Lead operators should be matched without regard to their lead function and could therefore be matched at any level above I. As a practical matter, leaders will usually be matched at levels IV, V, or VI. However, not all lead operators are matchable to the level-to-level distinctions in the WCP definition. Lead operator should be excluded when their console-related duties are at the same BLS level as the operator they lead (i.e., they receive additional pay primarily for making work assignments, arranging work schedules, etc.)

11. Should lead operators who duties include the scheduling of individual job runs be matched?

11a. If the scheduling consists of deciding the most practical order to run a series of routines, and is not the principal job duty, the position can be matched. Schedulers who decide which routines can be run and which can be deferred or who have scheduling as a principal job duty should be excluded.

12. What is the difference in concept between the terms "established production run" used in the previous computer operator definition and "scheduled routine" which is included in levels II and III of the definition introduced for the 1984 WCP survey?

12a. There is little substantive difference between the two terms. By definition, a "routine" is a set instructions arranged in proper sequence to cause a computer to perform a desired task (e.g., executive routine, library routine). The term "routine" is loosely synonymous with "program." A "run," however, is a single continuous performance of a computer routine. (See Supplementary Materials - Computer Definitions, Glossary of Commonly Used Computer Terms.)

13. The previous computer operator definition distinguished between serial processing (i.e., one program is processed at a time) and multiprocessing (i.e., the simultaneous processing of two or more programs). Why has this distinction been eliminated from the definition introduced for the 1984 WCP survey?

13a. The current computer operator definition is based on a new Federal OPM classification standard for computer operator which does not consider the distinction between serial processing and multiprocessing to be a Federal grade level determinant. Therefore, WCP job matches should be made without regard to whether serial processing or multiprocessing is performed.

14. What is a mainframe computer? How can it be distinguished from other kinds computers?

14a. Compared to other classes of computers, a mainframe has a large control console that requires the services of a full-time operator to keep it running. A mainframe also usually has multiprocessing and time-sharing capabilities.

15. Should we match operators of mini-computers?

15a. Mini-computer operators are generally excluded because mini-computers typically offer "little or no opportunity for operator intervention in program processing" (see exclusion a). Also, mini-computers usually lack the large control console required by the definition and discussed in Q and A number 14 above.

PHOTOGRAPHERS

1. What is meant by the "NOTE" following Level V?

1a. The "NOTE" excludes photographers who independently plan, design and develop overall objectives for photographs, such as advertising ideas, the public relations angles, or subject-matter themes, and independently decide layouts, series, scenes, or compositions needed. Such work is performed by operating officials or supervisors for matchable photographers who receive assignments with some definition or description of the photographs needed. Matchable photographers do, of course, have full technical responsibility for photographic, as opposed to design aspects.

Excluded photographers above level V are typically highly creative specialists, taking pictures for food, cosmetic, or auto advertising, etc.; record covers or similar products where sales volume may depend almost entirely on eye appeal; or features in well known, popular, and prestigious magazines, etc.

2. Where are jobs located that are excluded by the "NOTE" following Level V?

2a. An excluded photographer may be located at an advertising firm or a firm producing phonograph records, etc., where the job includes responsibility for specialized design and planning in a particular field as well as technical photographic requirements. Most advertising firms, however, also contract freelance photographers for these kinds of assignments. An excluded photographer also may be located in the public relations department of an organization and may have responsibility for planning, developing, and writing stores or feature articles which accompany the pictures.

3. Don't some matchable photographers help plan pictures or use highly creative photographic techniques in taking pictures?

3a. Yes. They may discuss photographic requirements of assignments with operating officials who make final decisions on the nature and scope of pictures needed. Levels IV and V describe how some photographers may discuss requirements and use highly creative photographic techniques.

At Level IV:

> Discusses modifications and improvements to their (the operation officials') original ideas in light of the potential and limits of equipment; or
>
> Selects and alters secondary photographic features (e.g., scenes, background, color, lighting) to carry out objectives.

At Level V:

> Develops and adapts photographic equipment or processes for novel and unprecedented situations; or
>
> Exercises limited control over the substance of events to be photographed by staging actions, suggesting behavior of the principals, and rehearsing activities before photographs are taken.

Of course, photographers matching any level of the definition may offer advice concerning photographic techniques which are relevant to the pictures desired by the officials.

4. Should "lead" photographers be matched to the definition?

4a. Lead photographers should be match, when their photographic duties fit a higher definition level than the photographers that they lead. Therefore, lead photographers who receive additional pay primarily for lead responsibilities should be excluded.

5. Should hospital "medical photographers" who work in operating rooms and have extensive knowledge of medical and surgical procedures be matched to the WCP photographer definition?

5a. Photographers in levels III and above are expected to have a substantive knowledge of their organization's activities in order to communicate effectively with operating officials. For photographers in hospitals, the definition extends to knowing the processes and procedures of various operations in order to take the right photograph at the right time. However, positions in which medical training serves as a primary basis for qualification requirements or compensation should be excluded.

6. Are "audio-visual specialist" matchable to the WCP photographer definition?

6a. Normally, "audio-visual specialist" refers to a position responsible for a wide range of public relation duties, including setting up movie and slide projectors for lectures and demonstrations, recording meetings and events on audio and video tape, and taking photographs. As such, the position is too broad for matching to the WCP photographer definition.

ACCOUNTING CLERKS

1. Should "Inventory Clerks" be matched as accounting clerks?

1a. "Inventory Clerks" should not be matched if their function is to maintain records of the quantity of each type of item that is received, in stock, or released for use or sale. However, clerks in the accounting unit who maintain the accounting records showing the monetary value of items received, in stock, or released should be matched.

Note: Accounting clerk positions often are given many different titles reflecting the specific function or record that is involved. Some examples of such titles are: cost clerk; posting clerk; accounts payable clerk; and accounts receivable clerk. Regardless of titles, the accounting clerk position always is concerned with records that are integral parts or aspects of the establishment's accounting system.

2. Should accounting clerks who handle money as a regular part of their job be matched?

2a. Workers should not be excluded solely because they handle money. Care must be exercised, however, to insure that such employees do not have significant duties outside the scope of the job description. Cashiers, tellers, paymasters, and cash disbursement clerks are generally excluded as their duties are not within the scope of the job description.

3. Aside from positions responsible for general ledger maintenance, are there accounting clerks/technicians above Accounting Clerk IV which should be excluded?

3a. Yes. Accounting Clerks IV are primarily responsible for maintaining subsidiary ledgers (e.g., accounting payable, accounts receivable) and journals and for balancing and reconciling accounts. Above level IV are similar positions responsible for maintaining either general ledgers or general ledgers in combination with subsidiary accounts. Also excluded, because they are not covered by the introductory paragraphs in the definition, are positions primarily responsible for the technical analysis of accounting data (e.g., comparing general ledger account balances, reviewing and analyzing financial statements, and preparing special reports)

4. If an establishment's accounting system is entirely automated, is it still possible to have valid matches at levels III and IV?

4a. Yes. The definition provides for the matching of accounting clerks in automated systems to all four BLS levels. Although fewer level III's and IV's are generally required than in manual systems, clerks having a knowledge of double-entry bookkeeping procedures are still required to work with computer input/output records in updating and maintaining automated ledgers and journals. The

BLS III and IV definitions describe duties and responsibilities found in both automated and manual accounting systems.

5. Can persons with formal training in accounting (e.g., Associate of Arts degrees) be matched as BLS accounting clerks?

5a. Yes, providing that their duties and responsibilities are matchable to the level-to-level distinctions in the BLS definition.

6. Should persons who have a knowledge of double-entry bookkeeping, and who meet the overall concept of the BLS definition, be matched automatically to level III or IV?

6a. No. Sometimes persons with double-entry bookkeeping knowledge function at level II. Matches must be made on the basis of duties and responsibilities and establishment job requirements, not on individual skill attainments.

7. In establishments with multiple levels of accounting clerks, is it possible for level III matches to be absent, so that normal progression is from level II to level IV?

7a. Yes. Occasionally establishments merge the duties of level III and IV into one job. In these instances, the establishment progression path propels workers from positions which match level II to those which match level IV. This unusual advancement in duties and responsibilities is typically accompanied by a large promotion (as measured in terms of establishment grade levels). Such a situation should, of course, be well documented in the SO-132.

8. What are the basic distinctions in the BLS definition between levels I and II?

8a. The primary distinction between levels I and II is the complexity of the work performed. Either BLS level may be an entry position, as Accounting Clerk I does not exist in many establishments. Another distinction between levels I and II is the supervision received, as inferred in the definition. Level I Accounting Clerks receive close supervision for all assignments, while level II Accounting Clerks perform routine duties independently. Positions performing level II duties under level I supervision should be matched at level II if the close supervision is only for an initial orientation period (e.g., 2-3 months); if the close supervision is for a substantially long period, the position should be matched at level I.

9. Should Accounting Clerks who perform non-routine accounting clerical operations which exceed level II and don't require a knowledge of double entry bookkeeping be excluded?

9a. Yes. Accounting Clerks who clearly perform work higher than level II and do not require a knowledge of double entry bookkeeping should be excluded. An example of this excluded work is posting nonrepetitive actions to either the debit or the credit column of the journal, identifying subsidiary accounts affected, and coding transactions. This work does not require a knowledge of double entry bookkeeping because the Accounting Clerk is only concerned with one side (debit) of the posting/transaction on the other side (credit) of the journal.

10. Is an Accounting clerk IV a bookkeeper?

10a. An Accounting Clerk IV is a bookkeeper, but not a "full-charge" bookkeeper. A "full-charge" bookkeeper typically maintains general as well as subsidiary ledgers of an accounting system.

11. Please define the terms "journal" and "subsidiary ledgers".

11a. The journal is the daily log or book of first entry; transactions are later recorded in the ledgers. The general ledgers are the master set(s) of accounts, summarizing all the journals (e.g., cash receipts journal or any others set up for recurring kinds of transactions) and subsidiary ledgers which may be set up to reflect transactions in a group of related accounts, i.e., for a particular;ar program product line, customers, region, time period, etc. In automated systems, the journals and subsidiary ledgers are replaced by computer print-outs, or card decks, etc.

12. Please explain what constitutes a knowledge of double-entry bookkeeping?

12a. Double entry bookkeeping involves self-balancing sets of accounts so that every activity requires dual entries, one to a credit and one to a debit. The number of kinds of control accounts will vary widely by establishment depending on their various needs for recording information and reporting on financial transactions Clerks need to know which accounts relate to each other an how different adjustments can be made to perform the kind of work at level III and IV.

13. Can you provide some guidance in distinguishing between level I and II accounting clerks?

13a. Clerks at level I perform the most simple and routine kinds of tasks (i.e., sorting receipts, verifying the receipts of accounting documents or computer listings comparing code numbers, matching related forms or doing simple additions). Workers at Level II need to know something about the relationship between accounts and codes so they can perform a wider variety of actions including correcting discrepancies, reconciling or recomputing vouchers, or posting according to detailed procedures.

14. Are Accounting Clerks III and IV clerical or technical jobs? Why is an Accounting Clerk V not surveyed?

14a. Levels III and IV represent both clerical and technical jobs. Our most recent review showed very few Federal government workers that would be equivalent to an Accounting Clerk V, performing primarily clerical work. Most perform technical work which is already represented by other WCP occupations.

15. In some establishments, particularly in the finance, insurance, and health services industries, workers with job titles (and job descriptions) similar to accounting clerks are found outside the accounting department. Can such workers be matched?

15a. Clerks should be processing documents that are part of the accounting system to be matched. Workers in operating departments (e.g., trust, loans, or billing) should be excluded. Therefore, unless an accounting connection can be shown, workers in departments other than accounting should not be matched. Some examples of jobs that should be excluded are: " certificate of deposit clerk", "balancing clerk", "loan service clerk", "premium accounting clerks", and "patient accounting clerk".

FILE CLERKS

1. How should clerks who work in a mechanized file system be matched?

1a. They should be matched on the same basis as clerks who work in a manual file system. The fact that they may push a button to obtain material from a file rather than open a drawer or may be filing microfilm rather than paper does not affect the match. Clerks who operate computing or tabulating equipment should, or course, be excluded.

2. Many establishments begin new clerical employees in a job that matches our level I. Employees may remain at this level for only 6 months and then are promoted to a higher level. Should such nonterminal employees be matched?

2a. Yes. In many ways this is a typical situation although some employees who are terminal at level I will be encountered.

3. Many establishments do not seem to have three levels of file clerks. Is it expected that most establishments will have three levels?

3a. Job matching should be on the basis of a match between the duties of the job in the establishment and our job definition. Our experience has shown that most establishments do not have exactly three levels of file clerks. Regardless of whether the establishment has more or fewer than three file clerk levels, each establishment job should be matched only if it fits our job definition and only to the applicable level.

4. At what level should file clerks whose duties include disposing of outdated material be matched?

4a. The duty referred to is not mentioned in the file clerk job definitions so it cannot be used as a level determinant. When file disposal is performed by file clerks, it is most commonly done by levels II and III.

5. What is the distinction between file clerks levels I and II?

5a. The key for distinguishing level I from level II is the type of material filed and the classification system used. Level I file clerks either do not classify material or they classify within a simple numerical, chronological, or alphabetic system. File clerks at the II level classify material by subject matter or finer subheading before filing it. Level II file clerks may also perform clerical tasks required to maintain and service files or a more varied, difficult, or responsible nature than similar work performed by level I file clerks.

6. Is a subject-matter filing system a must for level II and level III file clerks?

6a. A subject-matter filing system is necessary at level III, but not a level II. Alphabetic and numeric filing systems can be fairly complex (e.g., an extensive name file where identification must be established by social security number).

KEY ENTRY OPERATORS

1. Should key entry operators be matched if they transcribe data onto magnetic tape rather than cards?

1a. Yes. These operations involve the same skill for the operator.

2. Do key entry operators who are primarily doing verifying work match the BLS definition?

2a. Yes. Verifying involves the same skill as the original entry work.

3. Some establishments have two levels of key entry operator positions, but the two levels are distinguished from each other on the basis of quantity of work rather than on the basis of differences in the difficulty of the work itself. How should such positions be matched?

3a. It is not practical to devise production standards that would be meaningful from one establishment to another or from one industry to another. The job matches must therefore be based on the nature of the key entry work, not on the quantity which individual operators produce. In short, when the only distinction between two levels of jobs in an establishment is the quantity of work done, both levels must be matched to the same class of Key Entry Operators using whichever class is appropriate.

4. Is "coding" of data essential in order for a position to be matched as Key Entry Operator II?

4a. In a very literal sense, coding would not be an absolute necessity. In a practical sense, however, the entering of data which must be searched for, interpreted, selected, etc., will frequently require the operator to also do some coding or to perform an identification and selection task that is comparable. In any case, the interpretation, selection, coding, identification, etc., of the data that are to be entered using a variety of source documents requires of the operator experience, training, and the use of a level of judgment that is significantly greater than is necessary for the performance of the routine, repetitive, simple work that characterizes level I.

5. How much time may a key entry operator spend on non-key entry work and still be a match?

5a. For most clerical occupations, the occasional performance of duties outside the definition at the same or a lower level of complexity does not affect the match (e.g., an accounting clerk dong some filing, a file clerk performing some very routine recordkeeping, etc.). However, a review of key entry operator jobs in industry indicates that the regular and recurring performance of tasks that require a significant amount of time in addition to key entry work typically involves clerical work of a higher skill level. This is cause for exclusion. Any combination jobs should be investigated very carefully before matching as key entry operator.

6. Should key entry operators be matched if they also operate a visual display device in the data entry process?

6a. Key entry operators may operate a visual display device in the course of the entry and verification of the data. It is the purpose of the job that contributes matching information. For example, if the purpose of the visual display device operation is the reading and evaluation of the substance of the record to take actions or make changes involving substantive knowledge, the position is not to be matched. On the other hand, if the key entry employee operated the visual display device to perform entry and/or verification, the position may be matched to the appropriate level if it otherwise matches the requirements.

Substantive knowledge refers to clerical work in which key entry operators are concerned with the subject (or the what and why) of the transaction. Key entry operators performing such work make certain decisions regarding the adequacy of the content of the proper key entry procedures.

7. Should proof machine operators in banks and S&L's be matched?

7a. If the job is typical (as described in the banking IWS) it should not be matched.

MESSENGERS

1. Various titles are used for positions that could match the messenger description. What are some of the titles likely to be encountered and which of these most often identify matching positions?

1a. Because of the diversity of titles used to identify the work described in "messenger", little reliance can be placed on the establishment title in the matching process. Instead, the respondent should be asked if there are any positions which require the performance of the various routine duties indicated in the BLS description, regardless of title. Listed below are several job titles which are often associated with the duties referred to in our description. Following each title is a summary of previous matching experience.

Office boy or girl - Often a match. However, some positions may not match because they require operation of office machines which are relatively complex (e.g., an offset press similar to a multilith, a desk calculator) and others because they may require the performance of more difficult clerical work (e.g., ordering, receiving, and accounting for office supplies).

Mail clerk - Often a match. However, some positions include discretionary duties which cause exclusion, such as: mail reading and routing work that is not routine; work direction responsibilities over other mail clerks; and responsibilities for weighing mail, determining postage, and controlling registered, insured, and certified mail in the mail room.

Inside messenger - Often a match. Like the portion titled "office boy or girl", however, some portions may have machine operation or clerical requirements above the leave described.

Outside messenger - Often not a match. For many "outside" messenger positions use of a motor vehicle is a significant duty and they are excluded for this reason. Other "outside" messengers jobs (and some inside jobs as well) include duties that are not "routine" and hence are excluded on this basis (e.g., responsibility for the safe transport of valuables, handling and delivering security classified mail according to security regulations and procedures, and the performance of unusually physically demanding tasks).

Copy boy or mat boy - Many positions with those titles are not a match because: they may be trainee professional workers gaining experience in the operation of a newspaper; or they may have special responsibilities in their contract with advertisers and outside agencies; or they use a motor vehicle as a significant duty. However, a "copy boy" whose duties include distributing material from desk to desk within the newspaper office and performing routine duties as described should be match.

Bank messenger - Inside bank messengers (sometimes called "pages") are often matches. On the other hand, those who perform duties outside the bank are often not matches because: the use of a motor vehicle is a significant duty; they may be responsible for safe transport of valuables; or they may have other duties which do not fit the routine concept of the survey description.

Runner- Usually not a match. Although workers in portions with this title (employed in financial institutions such as banks and brokerage houses) may perform most of the functions in the job description, their classification and compensation is often affected by responsibility for handling document worth large sums. Also, they may operate a motor vehicle as a significant duty.

Railroad call boy - Usually not a match. While perhaps performing duties as in the survey description, the work is oriented toward the operational activity of notifying members of train, engine, or yard crews that they are to report duty.

2. Should a position be excluded if possession of a driver's license is a job requirement?

2a. If operation of a motor vehicle is not a significant duty of portion, the driver's license requirement would not cause automatic exclusion. "Significant duty," as used in the description, means that operation of motor vehicle would cause a difference in the evaluation of the position for pay setting purposes.

3. Should positions be matched as messengers if duties are limited to full-time distribution of mail, carrying messages, and running errands?

3a. Such positions should be matched if these are routine duties and the motor vehicle operation exclusion does not apply. They need not perform other routine duties such as operating minor office machines or doing minor clerical work.

4. Should positions be matched as messengers if duties are limited to full-time operation of minor office machines or to full-time performance of minor clerical work?

4a. Should positions should not be matched. Inclusion of "...operating minor office machines..." and performing "...minor clerical work...." in the description was to permit the matching of jobs which consist of a combination of routine duties in addition to distributing mail, carrying messages, and running errands.

5. Should messengers who occasionally determine postage or log in special handling mail be excluded?

5a. If these duties are pay factors, the workers in question should be excluded.

6. In hospitals, should "Rx-messengers" who deliver prescriptions to patients in their rooms be matched to the WCP messengers definition?

6a. Yes, unless "Rx-messengers" receive additional pay for handling sensitive material (e.g, drugs), they should be matched to the WCP messenger definition.

SECRETARIES

1. The job description says the secretary "provides principal secretarial support in an office, usually to one individual, and, in some cases, to the subordinate staff of that individual" and that "secretaries assigned to two or more professional, technical, or managerial persons of equivalent rank" are excluded. How rigidly must the rule be followed that the secretary is assigned to only one person (and staff)?

1a. Quite rigidly. The close and highly responsive work relationship that characterizes the secretarial job is often not possible when the "secretary" works for two or more persons of equivalent rank. Therefore, "secretaries" who are assigned to groups of individuals (2, 3, or more) such as salesmen, engineers, vice presidents, etc., who each need only part-time help, are excluded even though the person provides "secretarial-type" services to the group. There are occasional rare instances where a secretary can serve two (never more) individuals of equivalent rank and their staffs and still meet the criteria for inclusion. For example, a secretary may serve both the president and chairman of the board of a company. If the chairman of the board is not heavily involved in the day-to-day management of the company and does not require full-time secretarial services, the secretary who provides full secretarial services for the president can be matched.

2. ☞ Exclusion "a" of the WCP secretary definition excludes secretaries working under the direction of other secretaries. Should two (2) secretaries of equal rank who report to one supervisor be matched or excluded?

2a. When two secretaries of equal rank report to one supervisor, both secretaries should be excluded. Although the LR level of both secretaries may be accurately determined, the LS level will typically be diluted.

3. Sometimes, when the matching of secretary jobs is completed at an establishment, few or no jobs have been found at one or more of the levels. Should secretary matches be distributed evenly among all the levels?

3a. It is not essential that all the levels, or even that successive levels, be found in each establishment. Since there is only one opportunity for a match a level III (i.e., LS-/LR-2), few Level II matches may be made. Sometimes both the LS and LR levels increase simultaneously, resulting in matches at levels I, III, and V, with no matches at levels II and IV.

4. Can a supervisor who has no subordinate staff other than a secretary (i.e., nonsupervisory staff specialist) be matched to LS-I?

4a. Yes. Nonsupervisory staff specialists, such as professional employees, skilled technicians, experts, and administrative officers, that do not have subordinate staff other than a secretary, can be matched to LS-I. However, care should be exercised since many organizations assign stenographers, rather than secretaries, to these nonsupervisory workers.

5. The LS-2 definition specifies that the organizational structure must be divided into subordinate groups that differ from each other as to matter, function, etc. If a large organizational unit of professional employees (e.g., State or local government program) is subdivided into sections, each performing very similar work, should the unit head be matched to LS-2?

5a. No. The size of an organizational unit, by itself, does not add sufficient complexity to a secretarial portion to warrant a change in BLS level. The work of LS-2 secretaries is complicated by difficult coordination requirements arising from the variety of different work groups for which the supervisor is responsible.

6. Does the top official of a subsidiary organization (e.g., Division President, Agency head) have to have considerable impact on the policies and major programs of the parent organization (e.g., parent company, State government) in order to be matched to LS-3?

6a. No. The top official of a subsidiary organization needs only to have substantial impact on the subsidiary organization's policies and major programs in order to be matched to LS-3, and not on the parent organization's policies and programs.

7. Should all top policy-making officials (e.g., presidents agency heads) be matched to LS-3?

7a. Policy-making officials responsible for large complex organizations are generally matched to LS-3. Other policy-making officials may more appropriately match at LS-2, as either the small size of their organizations or the homogeneous nature of their functions (e.g., retail chain stores) may not require subordinate LS-2 supervisors meeting this "manger" concept (See Q&A number 8).

8. Is there any ceiling as to how large the supervisor's organization can be and still matched to LS-3?

8a. No. There no employment ceiling to LS-3. The employment size of the supervisor's organization is not a level-determine factor in any of the LS levels. Secretaries to heads of organizations of any size may be matched to LS-3, providing, of course that the secretaries do not perform the higher level administrative assistant duties described in the exclusion following LR-4.

9. LS-3 states that a least one of the subordinate supervisory levels of the executive's organization must be a managerial level. What responsibilities are characteristic of a manager, as opposed to a supervisor?

9a. This requirement ensures that 3rd-line supervisors are not automatically matched to LS-3, which is a level of substantial importance, usually over several major organization programs. The one or more subordinate "managers" discussed in LS-3 are typically responsible for the following or equivalent kinds of functions:

- Making final recommendations to the policy-making executive regarding which assigned programs or major projects should initiated, dropped, expanded, or curtailed and the timing for these changes;
- Determine the long-range plans, resources, and evaluations for assigned programs;
- Determine specific changes to be made in the assigned organization's structure, including ways to improve management controls, efficiency, or coordination among subordinate units;
- Suggesting changes needed in view of public relations implications or impact or organizational image;
- Offering final recommendations or decision on hiring and disciplining supervisors.

Supervisors often are responsible only for day-to-day activities or for developing plans and schedules to meet the goals, objectives, and broad priorities established at higher management levels.

10. Should top officials (e.g., president) of multi-level organizations with no formal reporting structure be matched to LS-2?

10a. No. Heads of multi-level organizations with no formal reporting structure should be excluded. If, in fact, the organization's defined organizational layers are not used for administrative purposes and the top official personally directs all or most of the staff, the official should be matched.

11. Generally, what are the differences between LR-1, LR-2, LR-3, and LR-4? How many of the duties listed under to the LR levels must a secretary perform in order to be matched to a specific LR level?

11a. LR-1 describes the typical secretary who independently performs the recurring clerical work of the office. The supervisor sets the priorities and deadlines and provides instructions for new assignments. LR-2 secretaries, using an acquired knowledge of the supervisor's duties, priorities, policies, and program goals, are able to take some of the pressure off the supervisor by independently handling more responsible work and solving clerical problems using established procedures. LR-3 secretaries may not always have guidelines, precedents, or supervisor's instructions to follow for their varied work assignments, and therefore, use more initiative and judgment making decisions on the type of action required to complete the assignment. LR-4 secretaries receive considerably less supervision than the other levels and typically keep the office running smoothly and efficiently under complicated circumstances without the help of the supervisor.

Matches to the LR levels should not be determined simply by choosing the LR level that includes most of the duties performed by a secretary. The position should be looked at as a whole and matched at the appropriate LR level by using the introductory paragraphs of the LR levels which describe the overall level of responsibility; the duties listed in each LR level are examples of the kind of work that are typically performed.

12. Should a secretary who takes and transcribe dictation in a foreign language be matched?

12a. If the foreign language skill is a requirement of the job and the secretary receives additional compensation because of the special skill, the secretary should be excluded.

13. Does a secretary have to be able to take shorthand to matched?

13a. No, an employee who otherwise fits the description should be matched. Note that stenography is but one of many duties listed in the description.

14. Occasionally, a secretary has the official title of "Secretary" in a corporation. Should a person with this title be excluded?

14a. If the title indicates nothing more than that the secretary takes the official minutes of board meetings and carries no extra compensation, the job can be matched if it meets the requirements of the definition. Such situations should be reviewed closely, however, to insure that the secretary does not have duties beyond the scope of the definition.

15. Exclusion (d) of the definition excludes secretaries performing any kind of technical work. How strictly should exclusion (d) be interpreted, e.g., can a secretary to the personnel director compile budget data for the personnel department without being excluded? Also, is there a contradiction between exclusion "d" and LR-4 secretaries who "compose correspondence requiring some understanding of technical matter"?

15a. Exclusion (d) is designed to exclude secretaries who are regularly involved in the technical work of their office, e.g., a personnel director's secretary who interviews applicants or maintains personnel or payroll records, a controller's secretary who maintains accounting records, or a legal secretary who conducts legal research. As these technical duties require different skills than secretarial work, they may appear more complicated than the examples listed in the definition for LR-2.

16. How can LS-2 and LS-3 be distinguished?

16a. In large establishments LS levels 2 and 3 can usually be correlated with the level of managerial responsibility regarding policy decisions. For example, the LS-3 level is considered above GS-15 level of responsibility. For further clarification please compare the definition of "executive employees" shown on p.47 of the OWS Manual of Procedures and in Q&A 14 for chemists and engineers with Q&A 8 for secretaries.

17. Can you give examples of duties and responsibilities of positions that are above GS-15 in any of the series that we survey (e.g. attorneys, directors of personnel, engineers)?

17a. No. Federal OPM job standards define positions from GS-1 to GS-15. There are no detailed job specifications for positions above GS-15.

18. In large establishments, the LR level of a secretary may be difficult to determine if they are graded only according to the level of their supervisor. In such cases, how do we determine the appropriate level of responsibility for each secretary?

18a. If job descriptions exist which apply to the levels of the establishment's secretaries, use the "general rule" in lieu of individual job responsibilities to match secretaries.

19. What are some of the major differences between an administrative assistant and our LR-4 level?

19a. Administrative assistants deal with significant substantive and technical aspects of their superior's work. See Q&A 15 for further clarification. Note that positions title "administrative assistant" often match LR-3 or LR-4.

20. Should secretaries who use word processing equipment be matched?

20a. Yes.

21. What LS levels are typically found in the organizational ranks of hospitals?

21a. Dues to the relatively flat organization structure and the homogeneous nature of hospital functions, managers and directors in medium-sized and large hospitals (i.e., over 1000 employees) are generally matched at the LS-1 level. Hospital administrators, vice-presidents, and sr. vice-presidents generally match at LS-2 due to the diversity of organizational functions. LS-3 is usually reserved for presidents of large independent hospitals.

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TYPISTS

1. What is the significance of the phrase "copying more complex tables" in the typist I definition?

1a. The reference to "copying" rather than "typing" is to exclude workers who type complex tables from a rough format. Typing tables according to an existing format, but entering new figures, is therefore I rather than II level work.

2. If an establishment has two clerk typist levels, with the lower level matching our Typist I, can we automatically assume that the higher level matches our Typist II?

2a. No. The difference in pay between establishment levels of clerk typists may be based primarily on the complexity of clerical work rather than on the complexity of typing skills. Clerk typist positions containing clerical duties which are more complex than those described in the definition ("involving little special training, such as keeping simple records, filing records and reports, or sorting and distributing income mail") should be matched or excluded from the WCP general clerk series.

3. Why don't we include work processors in the survey? Typists are becoming obsolete.

3a. The OPM does not have a work processors operator standard. Until one is approved, word processor will not be added to the WCP survey.

PERSONNEL CLERKS/ASSISTANTS (EMPLOYMENT)

1. What does the combination job title personnel clerk/assistant (employment) indicate?

1a. The combination job title personnel clerk/assistant (employment) indicate that the 5 level job includes both clerks and technical assistant. Level I, II, and III (a) describe clerical positions. Levels III (b), IV, and V describe technical assistant duties.

2. How much work outside of the employment function is acceptable without being and exclusion?

2a. Any additional duties must be incidental to the employment activities described in the definition.

3. How do the terms "interviews" and "screens" relate to each other in the context of the personnel clerk/assistant definition?

3a. Someone who is performing a screening function will be interviewing applicants but not in the depth that an employment interviewer would. The purpose of the screening interview is usually to determine whether a full scale employment interview is justified.

4. Should employment interviewers be matched as BLS personnel clerk/assistants?

4a. Some match and some don't match. If the employment interviewer has been delegated authority to hire permanent employees, the job does not match. If this authority is not present the job is a likely match. Note that the delegating or hiring authority may include restraints such as: organization policy and guidelines; rigid qualification requirements; and instructions to reject applicants that are not clearly acceptable. Such restraints do not sufficiently downgrade the hiring authority to permit a BLS match. On the other hand, if the employment interviewer determines which candidates fully meet the job qualifications and sends them to their prospective supervisor for final approval, the interviewer can be matched. In most cases, if you can determine whether or not the interviewer tells the applicant "you are hired, " you will know whether the job can be matched to the BLS definition. Note also that many employment interviewer positions are developmental level professional jobs for college graduates. Such jobs should be excluded.

PURCHASING CLERKS/ASSISTANTS

1. How much time must the worker spend in a normal day in the purchasing activities described in our definition to be a match?

1a. Any additional duties must be incidental to the purchasing activities described in the definition.

2. Exclusion (c) describes workers who as a primary duty reorder items by phone under ongoing contracts. Isn't this the same work which is described in Level II of the definition, "may reorder items under routine and existing purchase arrangements where few if any questions arise?"

2a. Yes, the sentence from the definition describes the same or a very similar duty. However, the purchasing assistants match to Level II do not "reorder items by phone under ongoing contracts" as the primary duty of their job. Workers to be excluded repetitively telephone suppliers to send further orders for the same item under the same ongoing terms as their primary duty; the are not involved with the significant variations in orders and with their completeness and correct processing.

3. What is the difference between the knowledge purchasing assistants use to examine and process documents and the "technical knowledge of equipment characteristics and parts" described in exclusion (f)?

3a. Purchasing assistants need to be familiar with the kind of precise specifications that technical equipment requires and the kind of contract specifications that specified items generate. However, purchasing assistants do not use technical knowledge to write specifications when a comparison and evaluation of the technical features is necessary, such as the mechanical, engineering, scientific, chemical, or metallurgic, etc., characteristics of the item. These kinds of technical evaluations and comparisons are typically done by scientists, specialists, or technicians with special knowledge in a specific area.

4. What is the reason for excluding the workers described in exclusion (a)?

4a. Knowledge of internal purchasing procedures and operations is the distinguishing feature of the purchasing assistant job. Workers who are not required to have such knowledge should not be matched as purchasing assistants. They can, however, be matched to other BLS jobs.

GENERAL CLERKS

This job addition was spawned from the WCP expansion to small establishments now underway. Our research and testing in such firms showed that many clerical employees each performed a range or combination of tasks, rather than specializing primarily in individual duties, such as typing. Accordingly, a four-level general clerk definition was designed to match workers performing a variety of office operations. There are also, however, legitimate needs for general clerks in medium and large offices, for example, versatility or flexibility may be essential in meeting peak requirements in such offices. Broadbanding or consolidating individual clerical duties into a general clerk classification is one common way large firms address this need; such situations may also match our general clerk definition.

Following are a number of questions and answers that will help with job matching decisions:

1. How should we view previous matches or exclusions of establishment general clerical positions in light of the new WCP general clerk definition?

1a. Valid matches to existing WCP jobs should be reviewed but not changed if they are still valid. However, previously excluded positions should be reviewed to determine if they match the new general clerk definition.

2. Where previous job matching decisions regarding establishment general clerical positions are lacking, e.g., in new schedules, what priority should be given to matching to the general clerk definition instead of to specialized WCP jobs.

2a. Top priority still goes to matching establishment general clerical positions to specialized WCP jobs.

3. Should employees performing work described in the WCP general clerk definition but who are training to learn a specialized job be matched as general clerks?

3a. No. Workers who are learning a specialized job should not be matched as general clerks.

4. Should specialized jobs that have excluded from other WCP matches (e.g., group secretaries, payroll clerks, benefit clerks) be matched as general clerks?

4a. No. General clerk is not a catch-all classification for specialized positions which are not matchable to other WCP jobs. However, the job matching process for other jobs may identify combination jobs (e.g, personnel/purchasing clerk) which are potential general clerk matches.

5. The definition excludes workers whose pay is based on the performance of a single clerical duty. However, interdepartmental generic clerical positions in large establishments typically include workers performing specialized functions. Should such positions be matched?

5a. Interdepartmental clerical positions (e.g, administrative clerk) should be matched as WCP general clerks as long as one establishment job description covers all workers in the position. When multiple establishment descriptions are used to describe the work, the position should be excluded.

6. Sometimes workers in interdepartmental clerical positions legitimately match not only the general clerk definition but also specific WCP occupations (e.g, accounting clerk). The matches to specific WCP occupations are usually based on respondent knowledge coupled with computerized department codes. How should these dual matching problems be resolved?

6a. Priority goes to matching workers to specific WCP occupations (see Question and Answer #2). The remaining workers in the interdepartmental clerical positions should be matched to the general clerk definition.

7. We sometimes have difficulty in distinguishing positions which match the general clerk definition from those excluded positions whose pay is based on the performance of a single clerical duty. The general clerk description includes duties which are typically performed in conjunction with most clerical jobs. Should we assume that functional job titles (e.g., inventory clerk) indicate an exclusion?

7a. Establishment job titles for matches above level II are typical generic or interdepartmental in nature. Positions with functional or department job titles and with duties equivalent to levels III and IV should generally be excluded. Exceptions should be based on an unusual combination of clerical tasks. Common clerical skills such as typing, filing, phone answering and data entry found in conjunction with functional job titles do not provide the combination of clerical tasks required of a general clerk match.

8. The 1986 definition specified the training time typically required to reach full performance at each WCP level. Why has the reference to training time been deleted from the definition?

8a. The reference to training time in the definition has been deleted to further emphasize the importance of work complexity in determining the correct level of a match.

9. What is the difference between general clerks and group secretaries? Both perform a variety of clerical tasks.

9a. A secretary independently performs the recurring clerical work of an office in support of one individual or a group of people, while a general clerk, under close or general supervision, performs a combination of clerical tasks in support of office, business, or administrative operations. A secretary maintains a close and highly responsive relationship to day-to-day activities of the supervisor (s) and performs duties that require a knowledge of office routine and an understanding of the organization, program, and procedures related to the work of the office. A general clerk performs work that requires only a knowledge of basic office procedures.

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